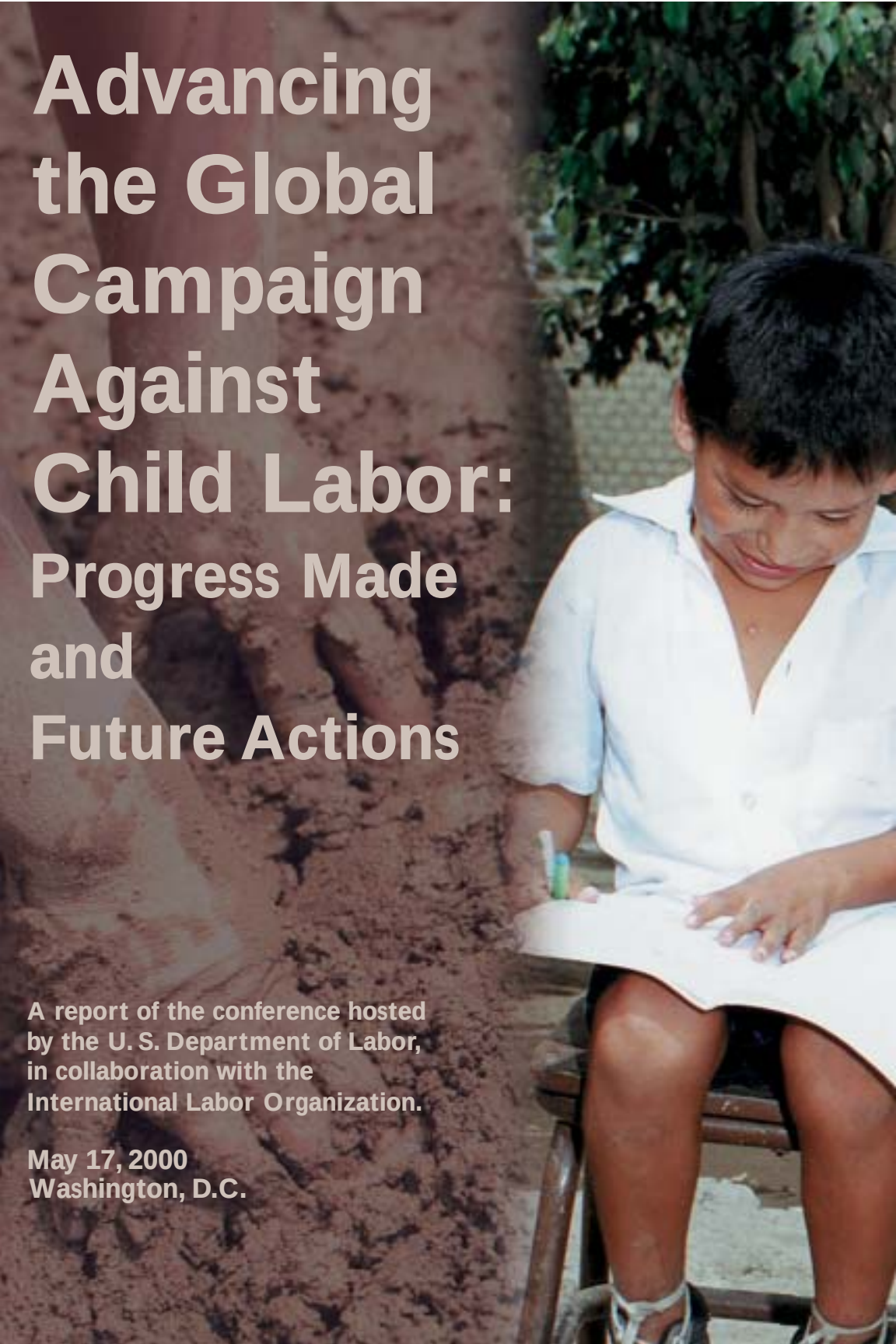
Advancing the Global Campaign Against Child Labor: Progress Made and Future Actions



A report of the conference hosted by the U. S. Department of Labor, in collaboration with the International Labor Organization.

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Advancing the Global Campaign Against Child Labor: Progress Made and Future Actions

U. S. Department of Labor
Elaine L. Chao, Secretary

Bureau of International Labor Affairs
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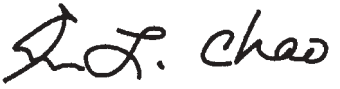
Foreword

Since the occasion of the Global Campaign conference on May 17, 2000, the United States has elected George W. Bush as its 43rd President, and I have joined President Bush's Administration as the 24th Secretary of Labor. The promotion of international labor standards and the elimination of abusive child labor are important cornerstones of the new Administration's agenda.

As the new Secretary of Labor, I am proud of the commitment the United States has shown to eliminating child labor around the world, especially its worst forms. The United States was the third country to ratify the International Labor Organization's Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor, and the Department of Labor is a strong supporter of the ILO's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor. Projects funded by the U.S. Department of Labor seek to remove children from exploitative work, and to provide them with educational opportunities and their families with viable economic alternatives.

This conference,"Advancing the Global Campaign Against Child Labor: Progress Made and Future Actions," demonstrated that significant achievements have been made toward addressing exploitative child labor around the world, but that much work still lies ahead. I believe that we can realize the dream of eliminating child labor by working together in partnership with other governments, labor unions, industry groups, nongovernmental organizations, and civil society. Together we can succeed in removing children from work that is abusive and exploitative, and we can provide these children with hope for a better future and a brighter tomorrow.



Elaine L. Chao
Secretary of Labor

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Introductory Addresses

Secretary of Labor Alexis M. Herman

Child labor is a global problem that demands a worldwide response. An estimated 250 million children between the ages of five and 14 work, half of them full time, and tens of millions work under conditions that threaten terrible harm to their physical, moral and intellectual development.

The problem is urgent, and yet this conference is right to focus on "Progress Made and Future Actions"—because there has been significant progress in recent years and we do have a strong foundation for future action.

The Department of Labor has worked with the International Labor Organization's International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor since 1995. During that time, we have seen the Clinton-Gore Administration's annual spending on child labor issues dramatically increase— with bipartisan Congressional support. The United States is now IPEC's leading contributor.

The President's budget for fiscal 2001 proposes $100 million to combat child labor. I am proud of the President's leadership and deep concern about children all around the world.

Programs funded by the Department of Labor provide more than 120,000 children in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America—children like the three who are with us today— with an opportunity to attend school, and also provide thousands of families with income-generating alternatives to child labor.

This international crusade reached a historic milestone in Seattle last December, when President Clinton signed an international agreement (ILO Convention 182) under which many nations will work together to eliminate the worst kinds of child labor. "This Convention enables the world to say, no more," the President declared.

Even more recently, in March, President Clinton's visit to Bangladesh focused international attention on a program that has removed an estimated 10,000 children—all of them under the legal working age of 14 —from work in garment

factories. This program, and others in Pakistan, Guatemala, Tanzania and elsewhere, have shown the world that children can be rescued from abusive child labor.

The worldwide abolition of child labor is long overdue. I doubt that we could have held this meeting five years ago. But the world has moved past denial to determined action. We meet today not only with the strong support of this Administration but of the American people.

This is the moment for broader, bolder action. In the past, we have focused on building a framework, public awareness, national committees, statistical surveys and targeted demonstration programs. Now, we must accelerate our campaign and work closely with countries to move their efforts to the next level—national plans with specific goals and specific timetables.

Our goal is not success at some distant, uncertain date, but the elimination of the worst forms of child labor in our time.

El Salvador, Nepal and Tanzania, with the support of the ILO, are initiating ambitious new national programs to remove children from hazardous and abusive work, increase their access to quality education, and create economic alternatives for their families. We look to them for leadership as we enter a new stage of the international battle against abusive child labor. We pledge them our support.

We do not say that no child should ever work. We do mean no child should be placed in forced or bonded labor...no child should be brutalized and exploited by the commercial sex trade...and no child should be placed in hazardous work.

There is only one word for that kind of work: intolerable. At the dawn of the 21st century, we must leave the darkness of abusive child labor behind.

Rather, children throughout the world should be nurtured not neglected...educated not exploited...and helped not harmed.

We recognize that economic opportunity for parents offers the best hope for children. But we reject the claims that in its absence children face only a choice between poverty or

exploitation. That is a false choice.

Child labor will not cure poverty—it will only perpetuate it.

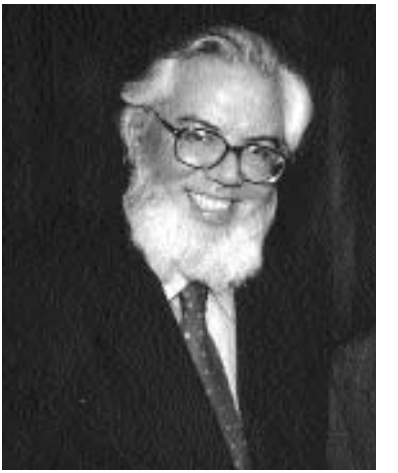
Nations cannot rise on the backs of their children. There is another way, a better way. It is the path that leads children to the classroom—not to workrooms.

We must see that children everywhere have access to basic education. As President Clinton has said, "If we want to slam the door shut on abusive child labor, we must open the door wide to education and opportunity."

At the same time, we must offer families of working children economic alternatives that allow them to choose school over work for their children. We must empower families, by such means as training adult family members in marketable skills and opening up access to credit so parents can start businesses.

Millions of children around the world look to us for help and the hope of a better life.

Juan Somavia, Director General, International Labor Organization



Imagine a country the size of the US, in which the entire population - 250 million - are child laborers. Then imagine, within it, the worst forms. An underclass of children - some 60 to 80 million at least. Roughly the population of California, Texas and New York combined.

Child labor, in many ways, is an abuse of power. It is adults exploiting the young, weak, vulnerable, and insecure for personal profit. Child labor is lack of opportunity for parents, and it is the biggest failure of development efforts. Together with the 1.3 billion people living in extreme poverty, it is the dark side of the global economy.

Is eradicating child labor from the face of the earth an impossible dream? I believe it is not. It should not be. It cannot be. That is why we are here today. All of us are committed to this course. We want to act, participate, contribute, and be part of a growing global movement. To make it happen we must begin by understanding local realities, reaching concrete communities, children with names, parents with faces, families in need.

During the last eight years some 90 countries have formed an alliance which has turned the issue into a global cause. From just one donor country (Germany) and six participating states in 1992, IPEC now has more than 20 donors and 65 participating countries.

IPEC and other field projects are vital, but they are not enough. Worldwide advocacy is necessary, focusing on the worst forms. A campaign that mobilizes by expanding and deepening commitment. A campaign that creates a climate of moral outrage making it uncomfortable, unprofitable, and ultimately impossible for the exploiters of children to continue in their ways.

At the same time opportunities for sustainable development are needed so that children and their families can find alternatives to the vicious circle of poverty and exclusion. Often, a child's pay is the only family income. Experience

has shown that education for all is crucial. Schools for children, and decent work for their parents.

One year ago, delegates from the ILO's member states—governments, employers, and workers—voted unanimously to adopt the new Convention on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor. Ratifying governments commit themselves to immediate action to protect children and provide them with education and rehabilitation. Today 15 countries, including the United States, have already ratified the Convention. Many more report that they will be doing so.[1]

Increasingly, societies are no longer willing to countenance the intolerable. They are ready to assume responsibility for the destiny of their children. National policy and international cooperation can be brought together in comprehensive time-bound programs for the eradication of the worst forms of child labor. Countries that move in that direction should be recognized and supported.

[1] *At the end of March 2002, 117 ratifications had been recorded.*

Senator Tom Harkin

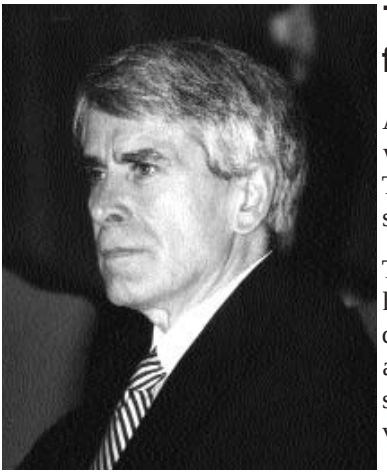
Not long ago, few wanted to speak about this issue and those who did speak out went largely unheard. Yet we have all come together: Labor Ministers, non-governmental organizations, business and labor leaders, to share best practices and find long-term solutions for children forced to toil in fisheries, factories, and fields.

I am proud to call myself a friend and supporter of IPEC since 1994. I have visited some of these IPEC schools and have spoken with the children learning there. I can say it is an uplifting experience to see excitement in the eyes of these children as they learn to read and write.

I'm happy to report that the US contributions to IPEC have risen ten-fold, from $3 million in Fiscal Year 1998 to $30 million in Fiscal Years 1999 and 2000. Just last week my Committee funded IPEC at $45 million for Fiscal Year 2001. To date, US-funded IPEC projects have provided over 120,000 children in developing countries around the world with educational opportunities they would not have otherwise had. This is something we can truly be proud of.

But more needs to be done. We are releasing the sixth DOL report on child labor, for which I have again helped secure funding. It confirms the importance of education for future economic development.

This report affirms that children are better off over the course of a lifetime if they go to school. Better educated kids grow into more productive and better paid adult workers. Education also benefits society as a whole: educated adults are generally healthier; more involved in the political process; less dependent on social support programs; more apt to save and to innovate. In fact, I believe the single most important feature, institution or practice of developing nations that inhibits their economic growth, inhibits their social growth, is the use and practice of abusive child labor.



Tom Niles, President, US Council for International Business

As we look at the issue of child labor worldwide, to me it is a bad news/good news story. The bad news is that child labor remains widespread in large parts of the world.

The good news is that the problem of child labor has assumed a much higher profile of late. This conference today is an example of that. The adoption last year of Convention 182 and its speedy ratification in the United States is also a very good sign.

My organization took a leading role in the process that led to Convention 182, and we're proud of that. We worked together with our affiliates, our colleagues from other business organizations that participate in the ILO.

Convention 182 is an important document from two perspectives. One, in terms of what it does, and that is to call for the elimination of the most abusive forms of child labor, and, secondly, for what it isn't.

One of the reasons why we were able to move so quickly in the ratification of Convention 182 in the United States, and I think it's happened in other countries as well, is that it's not an overly-detailed and very proscriptive convention, and those are the kinds of conventions that we in the business community believe the ILO should really focus on, so that we can not only secure ratification but implementation of these conventions. It does not benefit the workers of the world or the children who are in abusive child labor situations if a convention is ratified and then not implemented.

Child labor is not a result of the process currently underway in the world which goes under the general heading of "globalization." Globalization is not the cause of child labor. UNICEF estimates that only five percent of the child workers in the world today are engaged in what's considered the "export sector." So, trade in itself does not have a major impact on encouraging child labor.

The causes of child labor, at least one of the principal causes of child labor, is poverty. Poverty is a result of underdevelopment. Under-development can only be solved

through development, which depends upon the growth of trade and investment, among other things.

So, the answer, at least partly, to the elimination of child labor, is economic development, sustainable economic development, through trade and investment. And far from being the cause of child labor, under proper conditions, globalization can be one of the solutions to the problem of child labor through increased economic development.

What are the requirements for this positive process? One is that developed countries should open their markets more widely to the goods and services of the developing countries. A good example of what we should do is the recently enacted Bill on Trade Preferences for Africa and the Caribbean Basin countries.

We should encourage similar efforts elsewhere, including within the World Trade Organization, to encourage economic development around the world. This will produce at least some of the resources required for more education and for economic growth, which will make it possible gradually to eliminate child labor.

John Sweeney, President AFL-CIO

Around the world, children are employed in some of the most dangerous and degrading forms of work—doing work and performing tasks we may not even think of as a job.

A lot of this work is invisible. It is dirty, dangerous and even, at times, deadly. And it is work that may require very little skill—only the strength and stamina of a desperate, hungry child.

In today's imbalanced global economy, these children are valued not for who they are, or for who they will become, but because they are cheap, docile and expendable. They suffer from illness, injury and disease. They are part of families who struggle every day to survive, where adults are without work, where families are locked in a cycle of poverty, hopelessness and despair.

With all that we know and understand in this vaunted information age, who would have thought that we could not solve a problem which wreaks such devastation? We have conquered the moon and mastered the stars. We have designed machines to dig the deepest wells and lift any boulder. We can move goods production anywhere in our global village in a matter of days. We can split atoms and clone sheep.

Yet we have not been able to end child labor, which destroys lives and homes and communities as surely as any hurricane, fire or flood. It is one of the genuine nightmares of our time, one from which millions of children have not been able to escape.

We must fight the exploitation of children wherever it may be. Sometimes child exploitation has been taken head-on on plantations in Kenya, in garment factories in Bangladesh, rug looms in Nepal and garbage piles in Indonesia. Other times we've taken our battle to classrooms or conference rooms, sometimes to Capitol Hill or union halls.

In Kenya, workers have mobilized against child labor—harnessing community activism in areas where child labor is

rampant. Village chiefs and teachers identify at-risk families. Local unions, churches and officials pool resources to educate working families about financial aid and family counseling. Teachers organize youth groups to provide parents an alternative to taking their children into the fields. Employers help distribute information while workers weigh in their coffee.

In Pakistan, unions exposed the contradiction of young children who suffer serious injury while making and polishing the surgical instruments used in American hospitals.

In Nepal and Bangladesh, we established schools for children rescued from bondage.

We at the AFL-CIO are proud to be playing a supportive role in these movements through our Solidarity Center, at the same time as we are humbled by how much more we could—and should—do.

This struggle is about our basic values: what we will stand up for, and what we will put up with. What we are prepared to fight for, and what we are prepared to stomach.

America's working families and our unions are committed to fight to end the vicious cycle that traps families in poverty and despair anywhere in the world. We want to end the conditions that create the desperation that drives children into harmful work.

Gene Sperling, National Economic Advisor and Director of the National Economic Council, United States

We have a remarkable opportunity in the United States to make a major leap forward in forming a new consensus on our partnership with developing countries and their economic development.

But if we're going to do that, we have to see the interconnections. We have to see the whole. There are disagreements that exist between this Administration and some of our friends on some trade issues, but that is only one aspect.

Beyond that, there is an emerging consensus on a range of issues that we can make progress on, and it's not just an emerging consensus between the Administration and some of our friends in Labor, but between religious organizations, between NGOs, between Democrats and Republicans, and those issues are:

Debt relief, going forward on our debt relief initiative that was passed at Cologne, and on which the President went further by calling for a hundred percent bilateral debt relief from the United States.

Secondly, it is an attack on infectious diseases and a new effort to do more for research and funding for vaccines.

Third, it is an effort to promote core labor standards.

Fourth, to attack the most abusive forms of child labor.

Fifth is to look at what we can do to reach universal education by 2015, and increase the opportunities for developing countries to trade with us through instruments like the African Growth and the Caribbean Basin Initiative.

We have a new $55 million initiative that will allow us to deal with more basic education strategies that can complement what IPEC is doing, so that as we're going after the most abusive forms of child labor, we are also helping to ensure that the schools are there.

Our goal can never be to get children out of abusive factory situations just into abusive non-work situations, whether it's drug-running or child prostitution, or even simply inactivity. Our goal must be to move children into schools, into schools where they can learn.

There is a financial roadblock in so-called free schooling in developing countries, where a parent now has to decide not only to give up the temporary income from the child working, but take a third of their yearly income to pay for school uniforms and fees and all the other costs.

A total of 113 million young children are not in school, 97 percent of them in developing countries. 40 to 50 percent of all African children are not in school.

We are going to raise this issue at the G8 and the G7, and we are going to also push and ask for the World Bank to do more. The World Bank's lending for education has varied only between one to three billion dollars over the last few years, and less than half of that goes for basic education.

One thing I've learned is that you can't just look at education funding. Sometimes the education funding in a country is just going to a few, an elite class. It is a kind of reverse pyramid where most of the money is spent on a few, and a little is spent on the many to make sure that they're getting the most basic education.

If we could increase dramatically the World Bank funding, it would be part of a comprehensive strategy.

This conference offers tangible actions to show the United States Congress and the G7 what can be done on child labor, education, and on debt relief and health, which affect the budgets of countries and affect their ability to do more for education and fight child labor.

Addresses to the Conference by Ministers of Labor

Mr. Jorge Isidoro Nieto Menéndez, Minister of Labor and Social Security, El Salvador

No one is unaware that the roots of child labor lie in social and economic factors which are difficult to resolve. This problem has demanded that El Salvador, its national institutions and the NGO community establish strategic alliances in a coordinated and continuous effort to set in motion a process to eradicate child labor, a goal necessary for the future of our country.

To fight child labor, it is of primary importance to examine the social and economic forces which press parents into sending their children and adolescents to work at such an early age.

We must embark upon actions which allow the capacity of our children and adolescents to be fulfilled. To this end, the government has implemented a series of programs to combat the worst forms of child labor with the assistance of the ILO and DOL.

In 1996, the government signed an Memorandum of Understanding with the ILO, in which it committed itself to the gradual and progressive elimination of child labor.

This initiative depends on IPEC support to implement specific projects in localities and municipalities where the worst forms of child labor are prevalent. The government is also compiling a national report on these forms of work, which will provide a reference and facilitate the creation of a basis for a national program.

After the national report has been compiled and the problem investigated, we will be ready to initiate specific actions geared towards creating an integrated, firm, and sustainable policy to gradually and progressively eradicate the worst forms of child labor.

The projects which were implemented with the support of DOL were initiated to address the sectors where one finds the worst forms of child labor, as defined by Convention 182. We await the adoption of the requisite laws for the rat-

ification and implementation of Convention 182. The government of El Salvador has offered strong support for ratification.

To be able to implement our national program for the eradication of child labor, we depend on support from the US government and DOL.

In the field of education it is important to design programs to inform parents of the need to keep their children in school. At the same time, efforts to prevent child labor should involve the community in identifying the problem and in searching for solutions. Therefore the first phase of the program, prioritizing areas for projects, should result in better education of children and communities in the problem municipalities.

We know that the strengthening of education and training is essential. However, education alone cannot eliminate child labor.

Keeping children and adolescents in school can also mean economic sacrifice for the family group. Some families are willing to send children to school as long as there is the possibility of obtaining income by alternative means. Therefore it is important to provide support to parents.

In the field of health, there is a plan to bring attention to and to foster the health of children and adolescents and to offer necessary support to the family group, so that children may energetically pursue their intellectual and physical development.

In the field of labor and social planning, we have planned actions to improve the living conditions of the families of working children and adolescents.

Furthermore, the legislation on child labor must be amended, strengthened, promoted and enforced. Enforcement will be carried out in the first phase of this project in known problem areas.

In El Salvador, ILO Convention 138 was adopted with a reservation concerning the minimum age of children. Therefore, children's right to work depends upon their age. The prohibition of work by children who are below the minimum age will be enforced by the Ministry of Labor, with the support of educational and training programs.

As regards the families of child laborers, there should be vocational training projects in productive fields, and support for the organization of cooperatives and unions or guilds, in order to allow families to gain access to microcredit and required technical assistance.

The gradual and progressive elimination of child labor in our country will not be rapid or easy, but this has not stopped us from continuing with the process to develop a national program to combat child labor in the next four years, from mid-August 2000 to August 2004. The national program has the moral support of all the sectors of our country's national life and will incorporate participants from all the different sectors which are concerned with child labor.

Surendra Hamal, State Minister for Labor and Transport, Nepal

Exploitative child labor practice has been recognized as a major social problem in Nepal, as there are 2.6 million children at work, out of which 1.7 million are economically active. A household survey report of the Ministry of Land Reform and Management indicates that there are 15,152 Kamaiya households comprising 83,375 persons working as bonded laborers, which includes 15,000 children under the age of 14 years. In addition, there are approximately 5,000 sex workers in Kathmandu, out of which 1,000 are children. In mid-western Nepal, there are about 17,000 women and girls who work as prostitutes after having been offered to temples for religious purposes. Similarly, at least 5,000 to 7,000 Nepalese girls are trafficked to India every year and 25,000 children are engaged in the service sector such as hotels, restaurants and domestic service.

The Government of Nepal is very much concerned by this issue and has followed a proactive policy in tackling the problem of child labor. We have stood for constitutional, statutory and other developmental measures required to protect the rights of the child and safeguard them from abuse, neglect, violence and exploitation, for their mental and physical development.

We have taken various protective and preventive measures. The Constitution of Nepal guarantees rights against exploitation. It prohibits human trafficking, slavery, serfdom or forced labor in any form except compulsory service required for public benefit. The Labor Act 1991 and the Children Act 1992 restrict and prohibit the employment of children below 14 years. Our Parliament has recently endorsed a bill concerning the prohibition and regulation of child labor, which will come into enforcement very soon.

We signed an Memorandum of Understanding with the ILO for implementing the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC) in 1995. A child labor section has been set up to formulate and implement policies and programs on child labor. The National Steering Committee on Child Labor, which is based at the Ministry

of Labor and Transport Management (MOLT), has been actively participating in the formulation and implementation of action programs on child labor.

We have implemented an ILO/IPEC Action Program in the country. Under this program, we have assisted child labor prone families by providing skills training and easy access to microcredit and self-employment activities. We are now in the process of implementing another IPEC Action Program directed towards the "Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor." Similarly, we are executing a project entitled "Improvement of the Situation of Child Laborers." Most of our programs are focused on abolishing the worst forms of child labor such as trafficking, debt bondage and child domestic labor. The government ratified ILO Convention No. 138 in 1997 and is striving for the ratification of ILO Conventions No. 29, 105, and 182 within the year.

The government is committed to abolish the worst forms of child labor by 2005 and all forms of child labor by 2010. We are also striving to establish a program office to coordinate and collaborate with national and international agencies to improve policies and programs on child labor.

Despite our vigorous efforts, the problem of child labor has remained intractable. We strongly feel that this challenge needs to be tackled through a multi-pronged approach in an integrated manner, securing support from all concerned governmental and non-governmental organizations, and international agencies. However, we would like to reiterate that Nepal alone cannot solve this complex problem. We need to build up partnership and ownership with national and international agencies to execute a national program on child labor in a democratic manner, ensuring effective implementation and sustainability.

The ninth five-year development plan (1998-2002) emphasizes eradication of Nepal's widespread poverty as its major development objective. It has also given priority to the abolition of the bonded labor system, elimination of child labor and combating trafficking of women and children. To put these words into action, the Government of Nepal is taking a lead role in the development of a master plan of action (2001-2010) in close collaboration with IPEC and with other ministries and other national and international

agencies. The Master Plan of Action will incorporate sectoral plans of action against child labor, bonded child labor and trafficking in women and children (developed under IPEC Action Programs), identify responsible governmental and non-governmental agencies to execute specific components of the plan, as well as develop appropriate strategies.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Land Reforms and Management (MOLRM) has resolved to abolish the bonded labor system both legally and practically within the next four years (2001-2004).[1] The MOLRM has already initiated programs aimed at generating income of bonded laborers by providing them with skill-oriented training. A plan of action has been developed, in collaboration with IPEC, for launching programs in an integrated manner with a view to improving the quality of their life. The MOLRM is setting up a coordination directorate within the current fiscal year in Nepalgunj (in mid-western Nepal) for coordinating activities of all governmental and non-governmental organizations working on the issue of bonded labor. The MOLRM allocated NRs.40 million (US$598,000) during fiscal 1999/2000 for debt relief, housing and rehabilitation programs. The Ministry acquired 20 hectares of land for the rehabilitation of Kamaiya families. Similarly, it has proposed a budget of NRs.20 million (US$294,000) for fiscal 2000/2001 for the training and rehabilitation of Kamaiya families. It is expected that the national contribution for the elimination of the bonded labor system in Nepal will increase each year.

Simultaneously, the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MOWCSW) has also developed a national plan of action to prevent trafficking in women and children under the first phase of the sub-regional project supported by DOL. At present, the second phase of the sub-regional project funded by DOL to combat trafficking in children is underway. The Ministry aims to resolve the problem of trafficking in ten years (2001-2010), and trafficking among

[1] *On 17 July 2000, the Nepali parliament declared this system of agricultural bonded labor, as well as saunki (bonded labourers' debts), illegal. The MOLRM, with technical assistance from the ILO, drafted a Bill on the Abolition of Bonded Labour and registered it at the parliamentary secretariat for debate during the winter session (December 2000). The proposed bill provides the legal framework for enforcement of the ban by prohibiting the inheritance of private debt and annulling outstanding loans*

children in five years (2001-2005). During fiscal 1999/2000, the MOWCSW has allocated NRs.5 million (US$73,500) to prevent the problem, as well as to rehabilitate victims of trafficking. In addition, the Ministry has proposed a budget of six million Nepalese rupees (US$88,235) for the fiscal year 2000/2001 to deal with the problem.

We would like to assure you that Nepal is willing to join hands in this global cause and will provide every necessary support required in addressing the problem.

Honorable William Lukuvi, Deputy Minister for Labor and Youth Development, United Republic of Tanzania

The government of the United Republic of Tanzania is privileged to have joined the global campaign on child labor in 1994, when we began to implement the IPEC program. The government and the social partner organizations have since then made considerable progress towards containing the problem of child labor.

It is indeed largely within and through the framework of the IPEC program that we have in Tanzania today, at all the levels of society, a strong commitment and support for the fight against child labor, along with an institutional and policy framework which is increasingly conducive for program interventions on child labor. We now have, in addition, a considerable level of accumulated experience among the social partners in addressing child labor problems. The government of the United Republic of Tanzania, having consulted with the social partners, is presently finalizing the preparations for the ratification within the year 2000 of ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labor.

I do not need to state that in our resolve to rid our society of hazardous and exploitative child labor practices, we are constrained, like many other developing countries, by widespread poverty in its different manifestations, a generally weak institutional capacity, limited budgetary resources at the disposal of the government, limited educational opportunities for our children, and so on.

These constraints notwithstanding, I wish to inform this conference that, given the continued support of the ILO, the US government and other partners, Tanzania is keen to propose and implement a five year program to achieve the effective and sustainable prevention of the worst forms of child labor, in three sectors to start with. These sectors are commercial agriculture, mining and commercial sex.

We are of course mindful of the fact that this is by no

means a small challenge and that wide-ranging socioeconomic and political initiatives will be needed to achieve this objective.

As an input to the program, the government will implement strategic programs on poverty alleviation, employment promotion, primary education and HIV / AIDS control. We shall also disseminate and apply a national policy on child labor, which is now under final preparation in consultation with the social partners.

This conference provides us with added inspiration to act immediately on the worst forms of child labor and it is my anticipation that it will send the same signal to all countries around the world.

A Conversation with Former Working Children

Julekha Akhter, Bangladesh, 15

Julekha was seven when she was admitted to primary school. When she was in class three, her father fell ill and could not work. To help support the family, at the age of nine, Julekha found work in a garment factory.

After some time, Julekha was approached by IPEC representatives who offered her a stipend to enroll in a school for former garment workers. Excited by the opportunity, she presented this proposal to her parents, who agreed to it. The stipend paid the rent for the family home. Besides general education, Julekha participated in cultural activities like singing, dancing, reciting poems and acting. One of her poems even won a prize in a program arranged by the British Council.

After a year and a half at school, when Julekha turned 14—the legal working age under Bangladesh's laws— her stipend ended. Although her parents wanted her to return to work, Julekha was more interested in continuing her education. She did six months of skills-training and got a job with Dragon Sweater. Currently, she studies and works under an "earn and learn" program. Her salary now means that her family is no longer in poverty, and her parents are very proud of Julekha's educational achievements.

Her father told the audience, "I was a very poor person, and I didn't have the money to send my daughter to school . . . As a father, I want my daughter to study hard and go as far as possible in her education."

Julekha's aim? "I want to be a teacher." Her favorite subject in school is environmental sciences.

Juan Alberto Hernández, Guatemala, 14

Juan Alberto started working when he was seven years old in the Retalhuleu stone quarry on a river bank alongside his father, reducing stones to gravel with a hammer.

He worked for six years breaking stones during the afternoons and helping his mother with household chores. He attended school in the mornings but had difficulty keeping up.

Talking of the work by the river, Juan Alberto said, "I did get hurt on several occasions on my fingers. It was very hard and difficult to work there. Sometimes, I would even cry because it was so hard. The sun was really terrible, and we had to work all day long, breaking the stones into smaller stones . . . until I filled five containers of smaller stones."

Through a DOL-funded IPEC project aimed at eliminating child labor in the stone quarries of Retalhuleu, Juan Alberto was removed from work and placed in school. He recently completed primary school and wants to continue studying. I would like to be a teacher," Juan Alberto claimed with pride."

His father told the conference, "Juan Alberto is my son and I love him very, very deeply, and I want to give him everything he deserves, and I will continue to struggle so that he will be able to continue studying."

"The program, the people from Habitat , have given us all their support .

"I learned about the program while we were working at the river. Some people came and they talked to us and offered us a loan . . . The truth of the matter is that we were extremely afraid because we didn't understand very well why they were going to give us this money. Many of my companions left our group out of fear, and others, amongst them myself, said let us keep on going and see what happens, and they did give us a loan. We were able to buy a stone-crushing machine." Secretary Herman explained that using the machine meant that the stone-crushing could be done mechanically, and Juan and his siblings could go to school.

Mwaja Mahundi, Tanzania, 13

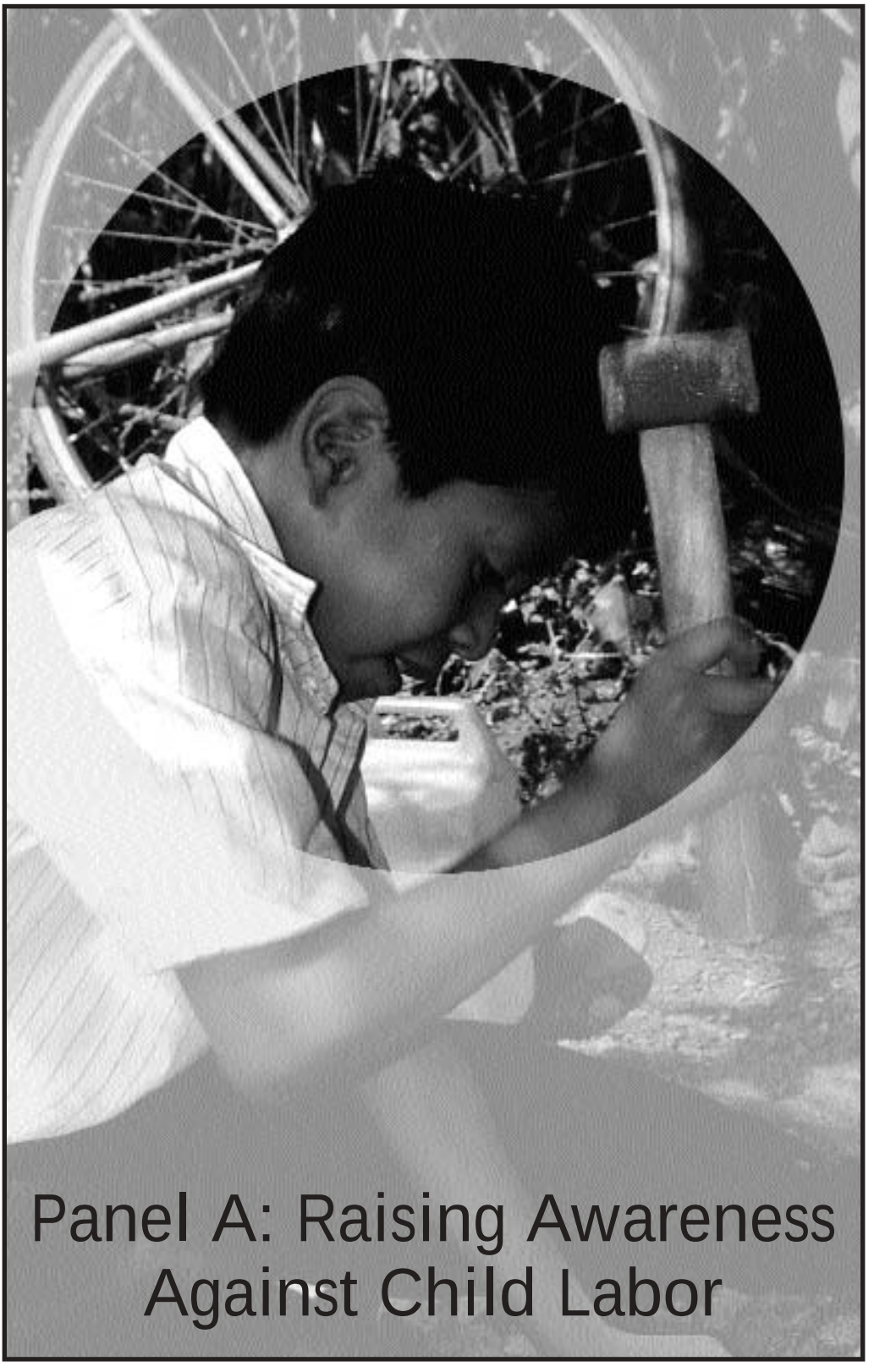
Mwaja is the youngest child in a family of six children. Her father passed away in 1994. In February 1999, Mwaja dropped out of school due to her mother's inability to pay for her school fees and uniform. She was taken by a neighbor to Dar-es-Salaam to work as a domestic servant for a working class family.

In response to a question from Secretary Herman about the work she did, Mwaja said, "My typical work when I went to take care of a baby, I had to wash the baby's clothes, and to maintain the cleanliness of the baby." She had to do this every day and was 12 when she started.

"The village chief," Mwaja's mother confided, "came to me and told me that there is a program which can help rescue my child . . . I was introduced to the people in this program. They went to where my child had been taken, and they helped me rescue my child and bring her back, and they put her back in school."

In July 1999, Mwaja was withdrawn from work and reintegrated into school through an IPEC action program. She was returned to her village and reunited with her family. She is now in grade five. Her favorite subjects at school are English, science, Swahili and mathematics. "I'm very pleased to return to school," she remarked, "and I'm progressing well with my studies."

"I want to be a pilot," she told the conference, covering her face in case anyone should laugh. Instead, like the others, she received long and loud applause for her ambitions. When Secretary Herman asked her what she would like to do in Washington, she replied, "I would love to go to a school and see how children learn their lessons in the United States."



Panel A: Raising Awareness Against Child Labor

The Global March Against Child Labor

Kailash Satyarthi

Background

The problem of child labor is one of the most serious, widespread social issues facing the world today. With an estimated 250 million children working as laborers, the issue touches the lives of most of the world's poorest people. While the problem is most prevalent in developing countries, even in the wealthiest countries children are found working under exploitative and degrading conditions.

During the 1980's and 1990's, there was a slow crescendo of public awareness and concern about the issue. The media took an active role in highlighting cases of child slavery and abuse, and the grassroots campaigns of several organizations built a base of public concern on the issue. High-level policy discussions also took place at the international level. But despite these developments, the issue was not a worldwide concern, and little movement occurred in the towns and villages where children were working.

Objectives

To address this situation, a number of leading child rights and human rights organizations met in The Hague in February 1997 to plan a Global March Against Child Labor. The objectives of the March were to mobilize worldwide efforts against child labor and in favor of education, and to dramatically increase the level of global awareness and concern about the problem.

The founders of the March felt that an issue of such magnitude could not be addressed by a handful of organizations or projects, but would need a broad mobilization of civil society throughout most of the countries of the world. Organizing the March would bring together a coalition of NGOs, trade unions, activists, government officials, academics, journalists, religious leaders, celebrities, and children. Such coalitions, in turn, would be capable of the sustained pressure needed to ultimately eliminate child labor.

Similarly, raising overall public awareness was a core objective of the Global March. The organizers realized that for the issue of child labor, public awareness was critical on

two counts. The first was that public awareness is essential in motivating governments to take strong steps against child labor. In the absence of national or international attention, few governments would be willing to challenge the vested interests and the cultural practices that perpetuate child labor, or to make the budgetary allocations needed to provide education and rehabilitation to children. The second aspect was that increased public awareness could produce a direct reduction in the incidence of child labor. Millions of people use girls and boys as domestic servants, subcontractors and small business owners directly employ young children, and individual consumers purchase products made by child slaves. Public awareness on the issue would influence people's individual decisions and thus help reduce the exploitation of children.

Process

The Global March initiated the process of global mobilization by issuing a worldwide appeal to join the movement. Internationally, this appeal went out through the various networks of NGOs and their partners, through international trade unions and their affiliates, and through a direct written appeal to over 20,000 organizations. At the national level, coordinators organized meetings of key partners, informed the media about the March, and initiated a dialogue with the government. A series of networking trips was also critical in spreading the movement into many countries that had not seriously considered the issue.

This broad movement then focused on the core task of organizing a high-profile March stretching across Asia, Africa, the Americas, and Europe. The March kicked off in Manila on January 17, 1998 and traveled 80,000 kilometers before arriving in Geneva for the start of the International Labor Conference. For March organizers, a certain amount of time was spent managing the logistical details of moving people from place to place and country to country, but the bulk of the efforts were devoted to public awareness-raising. These activities included: organizing large public rallies; producing posters and other public materials; coordinating special media features and documentaries on child labor; making presentations to schools; collecting thumb prints and messages of support; and establishing child labor sites on the Internet. The Global March received a ringing endorsement from many of the world's leaders,

including Nelson Mandela, Bill Clinton, Tony Blair, and Pope John Paul II.

In this whole process, the participation and leadership of children was vital. Hundreds of thousands of children participated in the rallies and short marches held as part of the Global March. Millions of small thumb prints from children around the world added to the call to end child labor. And at the forefront, the Child Core Marchers who bravely traveled thousands of miles from their homes shared with the world the reality of their experience and pleaded that children should no longer be subject to such exploitation.

Achievements

The Global March has been an unprecedented success. Indeed, at the close of the 20th century it marks a turning point for the struggle against child labor. At the time of the Global March, the massive global alliance which was formed included 1,400 partners in over 100 countries. Since then, the movement has further grown to involve over 2,000 partners in 140 countries. The national coalitions of the Global March have mobilized broad public support for the cause and have been leading civil society action against child labor.

The Global March and the follow-up year of advocacy work were crucial to the development of a strong new Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. The children of the Global March were specially recognized by the drafting committee for their human impact on the process. Now the Global March is playing a key role in making sure that the Convention is universally ratified and fully enforced.

Finally, the level of public concern about child labor has increased many times over, and it has been clearly established as one of the leading issues of our time. This awareness extends deep into even remote villages and towns where children are working.

Lessons Learned

The success of the Global March demonstrated key lessons for the campaign against child labor:

- Children who have lived through child labor are the most effective advocates on the issue. They can speak

from the heart about their own experiences and convince even the most powerful people that no child should be exploited.

- Society must be broadly mobilized to support this issue. A national coalition involving NGOs, trade unions, activists, government officials, academics, journalists, religious leaders, celebrities, and children can be extremely effective in achieving social change.
- Local ownership and leadership are paramount in the process. This leadership is essential for having a sustained impact on local and national decision-making. It is also fundamental to the whole process of social mobilization.
- The media must be involved throughout the process. This includes not only coverage of the activities being organized, but also in-depth reporting on the issue and involvement in political dialogue.
- The scale of the effort must match the scale of the problem. With the problem affecting 250 million children in almost all countries of the world, the mobilization of society and resources must be on a similar level to have a significant impact.
- Efforts must be made with a clear sense of purpose and vision. This genuine sense of mission is what inspires people to join the cause and devote themselves to the struggle for a world free of child labor.

Kailash Satyarthi founded the South Asian Coalition on Child Servitude (SACCS) in 1989. SACCS strove successfully to forge a partnership with 500 partner organizations, human rights groups and trade unions throughout South Asia. Satyarthi is considered the architect of "RUGMARK," a voluntary non-commercial tool to label child labor-free carpets. He was the driving force behind the international movement which culminated in the Global March Against Child Labor. Mr. Satyarthi's efforts have been honored by awards from various countries, including the Aachener International Peace Prize – Germany (1994); Robert F.

Kennedy Human Rights Award – USA (1995); Trumpeter Award – USA (1995); Golden Flag Award – Holland (1998); La Hospitalet Award – Spain (1999); and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung Award – Germany (1999).

Brazil: Mobilizing Journalists to Advocate for Children's Rights

Geraldinho Vieira

Background

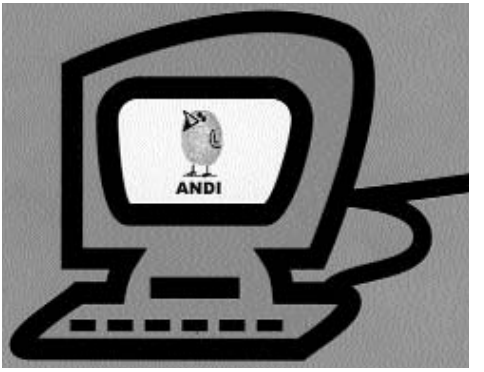
Brazil is a big country, a very young country that is only 500 years old. It is one of the world's ten biggest economies . . . but we are living in economic apartheid: Brazil has the worst indices of distribution of wealth on the planet.

Children and adolescents are the first victims: three million of them, under the age of 14, are working. Two years ago, the number was four million. We believe in eliminating child labor without having to define the "worst forms of slavery." We want the best education for all.

Slavery is like ethics . . . You either have it or you don't.

ANDI—the NGO that I'm in charge of as Executive Director—was founded eight years ago with only three people. It was set up two years after the signing of a progressive bill called the "Statute of the Rights of Children and Adolescents."

Today, we are a group of 60 people, including professional journalists and students of journalism. Forty people work at ANDI in Brasília and 20 work in four different cities in different geographic regions. This Rede ANDI (ANDI Network) is an alliance with other NGOs that reproduce the methods of media training and mobilization developed by ANDI.



When ANDI was launched, the country was in shock regarding revelations about street kids, child labor and the sexual exploitation of little boys and girls. These problems still exist, but we are proud to say that, today, we are talking a lot more about the main solution: education.

The Brazilian government, with IPEC, is giving financial support to 140,000 children and adolescents who must work to make a living. The idea is now being taken up all

over the country, especially by municipalities, sometimes with private support.

Process

Unlike a regular news agency, ANDI does not write stories to merely distribute them to the media. Our goal is to create a culture in which the press gives priority to children as a strategic issue. This is only possible if we create a dialogue between the press and the organizations that deal directly with boys and girls.

This is why ANDI´s institutional mission is to generate a professional, ethical and intense dialogue between the private sector and the media. We work on the principle that investigation, in journalism, cannot be synonymous with the mere publication of scandals. ANDI's main focus is to stimulate the understanding of the paradigm of "finding solutions."

The idea of finding solutions is not synonymous with sensationalist journalism. We seek a different reaction from the public; that is, the sooner society knows the actions and public policies that are effective and that prove that changes are possible, the greater the impact of the stories. Once journalistic investigation confronts a social problem with its solution, the reporting of wrong-doing assumes a different aspect: the investigation of solutions relates not only to the reporting of problems, but specifically to the inaction of government officials and of civil society in general. We are sure that the roots of the problems are based on lack of action.

Inaction is worse than all the horror stories put together, and this is the message that is mobilizing the country.

Presenting Facts

The News Agency for Children´s Rights is a kind of reference center where journalists can find the best stories, the best analysis for the best ways of telling stories, and up-to-date sources of information—a guide for getting in touch with innovators and specialists.

Our site on the Internet (www.andi.org.br) has 100,000 genuine hits every month, 70 percent of them by journalists looking for social projects in all the relevant areas and new perspectives to old problems.

One of the most effective strategies that we adopted is to conduct research on the topics with the greatest press coverage, with the social actors listed as sources of information, and analyze the confrontation between the "investigation of solutions" and the publishing of scandals.

Every day we analyze the 50 most important newspapers and eight national magazines. During 1999, these papers and magazines published 60,000 stories on children and adolescent issues, 20 times more than the number recorded eight years ago. This observation leads us to conclude that editorial behavior has developed a consolidated culture of "solution finding." Finding solutions has resulted in a major development: when Brazil started to bring the child labor issue to the top of its agenda, coverage on the subject of education, which ranked eighth among the themes published in 1992, began to improve; this year, for the second straight year, it was ranked first among the topics observed in research.

Special sections for education are being created in almost every important newspaper and magazine. Last year, ANDI analyzed 9,500 stories on education and almost 2,000 stories on child labor. ANDI is also the coordinator of a permanent forum on media & education which involves more than 150 journalists and 15 important foundations.

Three years ago we were behind the creation of the Arden Senna Grand Prix of Journalism. This is an award that intends to encourage stories that seek solutions to problems related to children and adolescents. It is the major press award in the country, with 1,200 related stories every year.

We also are involved in the organization of another award that recognizes specific actions of the judiciary system that contribute to the creative and efficient application of the law. This award, which has more than one hundred candidates every year, gives us information for new story ideas that provoke the media to work on pieces about adolescents in conflict with the law . . . the kind of story idea that does not come up spontaneously.

We have a dream: to create an international network of journalists, recognizing some of them, every year, as Journalist Friends of Children. In Brazil, this program of capacity building is already working with 115 media professionals.

We are sure that our work would not be possible without the support of institutions that believe that communication can be a strategic instrument for promoting the changes we all want to make. They include UNICEF, Arden Senna Foundation, UNESCO, W. K. Kellogg Foundation, Avina and other national institutes and governmental organizations that support our initiatives.

Geraldinho Vieira is a journalist and the Executive Director of the News Agency for Children's Rights (ANDI). He was previously the editor of the Brazilian newspaper Jornal de Brasilia

The Philippines: Advocacy and Awareness-raising Campaign Against Child Labor

Alcestis Mangahas

Background

When the IPEC Philippines was launched in 1995, child labor was not a new issue. Despite the years of exposure and the creation of structures to deal with the problem, there was a lingering sense that it refused to go away. The numbers of child workers were increasing and, at the same time, the nature of the problem seemed to have become more severe. In local communities, especially those with high levels of child labor, apathy and indifference ruled.

Little girl from Sitio Libis of the San Rafael barangay, crushing rocks at the quarry site at Montalban.

Objectives

Central to the IPEC strategy is the belief that in all action, learning must result in a change in knowledge, attitudes and skills. The strategy has been based on:

- The availability of comprehensive national statistics,
- A national media campaign (print, radio and television),
- The demonstration and cumulative effect of field action programs, and
- The competence of key players.

Process

The 1995 National Survey of Working Children of the Philippines, implemented by the National Statistics Office, provided the necessary numbers as well as a broad overview of the situation, and highlighted the various hazards and risks. Obtaining information on "invisible" chil-

dren required creative approaches, more akin to investigation and surveillance; reasonable estimates were nonetheless made.

One of the first action programs in the IPEC campaign was the production of a documentary on child labor called "No Time for Play," made by the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism. It brought special attention to the problems of children in mining, pyrotechnics, sugar plantations and young workers illegally recruited from depressed communities in rural areas to work in Metro Manila. A second documentary made by the Center for Investigative Journalism drew even greater attention nationally. Produced by the Ateneo Center for Social Policy and the Archdiocese of Manila Labor Center, it became one of the most effective communication tools in raising public awareness on the worst forms of child labor. Several other documentaries followed.

Print media has covered the child labor issue extensively, especially the Global March and the adoption of the new ILO Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labor. The launch of the Global March against Child Labor took place in Manila in January 1998 and was a demonstration of the Philippine partners' strength in mobilizing action. The international marchers were joined by 15,000 children and advocates at the launching ceremonies. Countryside marches were held in all the three major island groups of the Philippines.

The Advocacy and Awareness-raising Campaign Child Labor Network publishes a child labor newsletter called "Bataman" and makes photo exhibits and multi-media presentations available to all partners.

Social mobilization at the community level is undertaken by councils or committees, which perform watchdog functions such as monitoring progress and lobbying for greater resources and/or services for working children. Examples of such committees are Barangay (Local) Councils for the Protection of Children (BCPC) and other similar privately initiated committees.

Typical action at the community/local level brings together two or three IPEC partner organizations. Community

organizing and advocacy are core elements, implemented by a lead organization. As community mechanisms are formed (such as BCPCs) and children identified, specialized agencies join the lead agency in providing specialized services in education, health, and economic alternatives.

Workers shovel the rock into a truck. On Sundays, after a week's work, the workers gather the rocks into mounds awaiting the arrival of trucks, which pick up the rocks and transport them out of Montalban.

In several IPEC action programs, child workers and their families have taken the lead in forming associations of child workers as a venue for sharing experiences and seeking assistance for their problems. Theater groups help project the children's views on child labor and their needs and problems. Training programs have been put in place for labor inspectors, program implementors, law enforcers, defenders and dispensers of justice, and child and youth leaders.

Challenges & Achievements

The major strength of the Philippine child labor campaign is its broad-based and strongly committed alliance—a network of government, employer, trade union and civil society organizations acting in concert.

From a position of hesitation and caution, the government position on the ratification of the international labor standards on child labor has changed to one of endorsement. The parliament ratified ILO Convention 138 in 1997, setting the country's minimum age of entry to employment at 15. The ratification of Convention 182 on the worst forms of child labor is expected during 2000.

The importance of labor inspection in identifying and monitoring of children most at risk has been reaffirmed. In 1997, the Department of Labor and Employment issued an administrative order giving priority to the inspection of establishments classified as hazardous or high risk.

A "Magna Carta" on Child Labor, Senate Bill 1530, was recently filed in the Senate. The new bill consolidates child

labor protective legislation and provides regulations for work conditions of young workers. It restates government responsibility for basic education, training and welfare services, institutionalizes the national child labor committee and requires regular monitoring and reporting. Another bill has been filed to provide a legal framework for protecting domestic workers.

At the provincial, city and municipality levels, local governments have passed legislation on the protection of children. Other government units have passed ordinances protecting children from prostitution and trafficking and/or banning the employment of children in specific occupations such as fireworks, mining and quarrying.

IPEC has started direct action in communities with a high incidence of children in hazardous work. These include communities with children working in ports; sugar plantations; farming and fishing; mining and quarrying; home-based work relating to garment production; commercial sex; domestic service; and scavenging. IPEC is currently working in 18 project sites with 20 active partners. While the impact of prevention programs may be difficult to measure, the advocacy program has reached more than half a million households with its media campaign. It has directly served some 34,000 working children and their families. There are other less quantifiable changes, such as self-sustaining and self-initiated activities at various levels for "Return to School" programs; access to livelihood and other community services; and interest in greater development issues like poverty alleviation, environment care, and workers' rights.

The National Child Labor Committee is sponsoring its own strategic planning activities to mainstream child labor concerns into the country's major development programs. The entry of larger integrated programs poses new challenges to the provincial and regional committees, such as coordination and management of child labor initiatives at the local level.

Lessons Learned

In the Philippines' experience with the Advocacy and Awareness-raising Campaign to date, the following basic elements for an effective national program have been established:

- Focus on priority groups,
- Participation and consultation,
- Effective communication,
- Integration and complementarity,
- Flexibility,
- Capacity building, and
- Networking and collaboration.

The main goals for the coming two years are:

- Integrating child labor into national development planning and programs; and
- Expanding community services for working children, with emphasis on children in hazardous work.

At the time of the conference Alcetis "Thetis" Mangahas was the IPEC National Program Coordinator in the Philippines, where she led the advocacy campaign against child labor in her country. She has extensive experience at home and abroad in social development projects. She holds a Master of Science from the London School of Economics and a political science and economics degree from the University of the Philippines School of Economics. Thetis was in Bangkok, Thailand at the IPEC Regional Office in Asia, and is now a part of the ILO Declaration team at the headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland.

A Closer Look: Where There's School There's Hope

by Luz Rimban

On any other Saturday, 11-year-old Gernieh Bahandi wouldbe squatting at a roadside, crushing into gravel the rocks his teenage brothers chip off a hillside near their home.

This Saturday, Gernieh is taking a holiday of sorts. He and five other boys, all quarry workers, are racing around the lawn of a rest house not far from where they live. Indoors, their mothers are huddled in a conference, members of the year-old federation "Parawagan," which aims to put an end to child labor in Montalban.

Child labor has been this town's nagging problem. Perched on the edge of Metro Manila's urban sprawl, it has attracted migrant families from destitute provinces like Leyte, where Gernieh's family comes from.

In Barangay San Rafael, whole families toil in quarry sites. It was Gernieh's father, a seasonally employed carpenter, who found his family a puwesto—a niche—alongside several other families at the quarry site in Tabak. Five of Gernieh's eight other siblings take part in various stages of the work—chipping rock off a mountain face, crushing it, or shoveling stones onto wheelbarrows to be carted off to trucks which buy them—six days a week.

Quarry families like the Bahandis in Tabak and at least two other sitios in San Rafael form the base of what is one of the most successful community movements against child labor in the Philippines. True, they have few options outside the quarry at the moment, but community action has shown them there are alternatives in the horizon.

The residents of the three sitios organized themselves into neighborhood associations to find alternatives and formed Parawagan, a federation dedicated to eliminating child labor. Parawagan's latest offspring is the organization of young quarry workers, past and present, called ECHO or Empowering Child's Heart Organization.

In July last year, one of the neighborhood associations, Tabak Community Development Association (TACDA), began a small peanut butter processing plant for quarry families. Parawagan also engaged in sewing and selling rags. In the last school year, with funding from IPEC and ERDA (Educational Research and Development Assistance), the federation made scholarships available for 129 high school and elementary children in the quarry areas. That figure has now risen to 150. The federation has also become active in dialogue and in collaborative efforts with government agencies and the private sector.

Parawagan is now a force San Rafael cannot ignore. Barangay officials have formed the Barangay Council for the Protection of Children (BCPC), which provides assistance to the community groups and further helps prevent child labor through awareness-raising and mobilizing the community for dialogue. The Montalban town council has approved a resolution creating the Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC), which formalizes the collaboration between the federation and the municipal government.

The Mayor has promised to channel money to Parawagan and donate three sewing machines for the federation's rag-making business. "We have managed to reduce child labor by 50 percent, but more squatter families are coming in," Mayor San Diego says.

But for Gernieh, the future does not look as hopeless as it once did. The 11-year-old, who has been crushing rocks since he was seven, says his membership in ECHO helped him relate more with children like himself. He is also proud of his Parawagan scholarship, which provides him with a school bag, a ruler, paper and crayons.

Still, Gernieh does not see himself out of Tabak's quarry areas, at least for now. Working assures him of the four pesos he needs every day for fare to and from the San Rafael Elementary school where he is in fifth grade. "My father won't give me money for fare to school if I don't work," Gernieh explains.

But it will probably take more than a lack of fare money to keep Gernieh from finishing his studies, and maybe even someday fulfilling his dreams of becoming a doctor.

Tanzania: Awareness-Raising and Social Mobilization to Prevent Child Domestic Servitude

Vicky Kanyoka

Domestic house work ranges from washing clothes and cooking to looking after babies.

Background

The rural districts of the Iringa region in southwest Tanzania have a high incidence of poverty, with large families and limited access to basic education. These factors invariably push many children into child labor, especially domestic labor involving young girls. It is estimated that 40 to 50 percent of domestic servants working in particularly hazardous and exploitative conditions in the major urban centers are girls aged ten to 15, recruited from villages in the region, notably Kiponzelo, Tanzangozi, Ilula, Izazi and Migoli. These children often escape from domestic labor only to end up in even more hazardous work like stone quarries.

Objectives

With IPEC support, the Conservation, Hotels, Domestic and Allied Workers Union (CHODAWU), an affiliate of the Tanzania Federation of Trade Unions, proposed and is implementing a package of strategic activities aimed at providing children and their families in the five targeted villages with alternatives to child labor. They also aim to increase the capacity of the village communities to identify, monitor and prevent recruitment of children.

Process

Community awareness-raising and social mobilization were chosen as the initial approach in order to sensitize parents, village government officials, school teachers, women's groups and religious leaders on the negative consequences of domestic labor. The sensitization campaigns were conducted through radio, community seminars, newspapers, features and brochures in Kiswahili, as well as via public meetings on child labor. Child labor committees were

formed and provided with training and orientation on addressing the problem of child labor in the community, including how to formulate and apply bylaws, how to carry out a census on working children and so on. It was foreseen that once the village communities understood and appreciated the need for prevention, they would identify and implement practical measures themselves, with the support of the trade unions.

A total of 200 very poor households were identified by the village governments and child labor committees in the respective villages, and are benefitting from a revolving fund that enables them to undertake small-scale income generating activities. The parents from these households have been provided with entrepreneurial skills training, organized by the trade union. Skills provided have included: business planning, business management skills, marketing, record keeping and cost analysis.

To date, a total of 100 poor parents have started small businesses. These include the operation of food stalls, general merchandise kiosks, gardening and horticulture services, tea and snack rooms, local brewing and secondhand clothes businesses. These families' living conditions have subsequently improved, and children from these households are attending school instead of working.

The revolving fund operates as follows: the trade union has opened a bank account in the Iringa region, and after the beneficiaries are identified and recommended by the village government and the child labor committee, funds are released to a cooperative group of five parents. After successfully operating their businesses for three months, the groups start repaying the loans into the bank account in installments, through the village government and under supervision and monitoring by the trade union. It is planned that, from the loan recoveries, a savings and credit union for poor households will eventually be established in each village.

It was also anticipated that such community-grown, grassroots institutional structures would take the role of formulating community bylaws to regulate and restrict recruitment of children into work, including the monitoring of primary school enrollment and retention of school-age children. It was also expected that community awareness-rais-

ing on domestic labor would result in the identification and eventual withdrawal of 800 children from work and the provision of appropriate alternatives, including reintegration into primary schools and vocational skills training.

Challenges & Achievements

To date, the following achievements have been noted:

- 512 children withdrawn from work and provided with either vocational skills or reintegration into primary school. The target of 800 children withdrawn is well within reach.
- Establishment of community child labor committees in the five villages, comprised of school teachers, parents, and community and religious leaders.
- A total of 250 community leaders made aware of the negative effects of child labor and the need to take immediate measures to prevent domestic child labor.
- Identification by the child labor committees in each village, in collaboration with the village government, of 200 very poor households to undertake income-generating activities through the revolving fund. A total of 100 poor parents to date have started small income generating activities. Their living conditions have improved and children from these families are attending school instead of working in domestic service.
- Withdrawal and repatriation of working children from urban centers and their reintegration into families and schools in rural areas. A total of 192 female domestic workers have benefitted.
- Direct support provided, including uniforms and payment of school fees, to enable children from poor families to attend school. To date, 271 girls have benefitted.
- Monitoring of the child labor committees carried out to determine the extent to which they are formulating interventions, including bylaws on child labor.
- The incidence of recruitment of girls from the five

villages for domestic work in urban centers dropped from 454 to 262 after eight months of activities. As a result of the bylaws which restrict the employment of children, parents are now more responsible for their children, making sure that they enroll in and attend school.

- Parents are learning how their children are treated by their employers and about the exploitation and abuse they endure.

Lessons Learned

- The best practice of this project has been to bring about a community-based program by strengthening capacity and establishing networks of various agents or partners at the grassroots level.
- The program is replicable because it makes the grassroots community more responsible and is not costly. It also addresses the main cause of child labor: poverty.
- Promotional and awareness-raising materials are most effective when printed and distributed in the local language.
- More strategies are required for capacity building, starting with intensive awareness-raising.

Vicky Kanyoka joined the trade union movement in 1991, and has been involved in the implementation and coordination of child labor programs in Tanzania as part of the Tanzania Federation of Trade Unions since 1995. She is the current coordinator of the IPEC child labor program for the union. Ms. Kanyoka is also the head of the Women and Organization Department of the Conservation, Hotels, Domestic and Allied Workers Union (CHODAWU). An educator by profession, she has attended a number of union training courses in Tanzania and around the world, as well as several international conferences on child labor.

A Closer Look: The Plight of Young Girls in Domestic Work

by Rose Haji

Monica Aloyce (not her real name) says, "It's better to earn a little and be spared the rigors and miseries of domestic work." She is now a member of a self-employment project called "Kibamku Group."

Monica is one of ten girls aged 10 to 16 in July 1998, who were identified and registered for withdrawal and reintegration from stone-crushing sites, commonly known as "Machimbo," on the outskirts of Dar-es-Salaam, by the Dogodogo Center for Street Children.

Born in Ilula village in Iringa region, Monica joined her uncle in the Kilimanjaro region. He supported her primary education up to age 12, after which she was not selected to join a government secondary school. She was therefore obliged to go back to her home village. There too, her dreams of continuing with schooling proved futile. "I really wanted to proceed with secondary school, but the fact that both my parents were and are still financially incapable let me down."

Monica's home, the Iringa region, leads in the recruitment of girl child domestic workers, who are normally sent to big towns by their parents to supplement family income. Abject rural poverty is the predominant factor pushing girls like Monica into domestic servitude, commercial sex and other extreme forms of child labor. Large family sizes and limited access to education are also contributory factors. According to a survey by the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA), girls come also from several other regions.

The girls are normally poorly paid, between Tshs.2,000 (US$3.50) to 12,000 (US$ 15) a month. Most of the children come from poor families who cannot afford to pay school fees. The average family size is six to 12 children.

Monica was forced into employment as a domestic servant in Dar-es-Salaam after her parents moved there in search of income earning opportunities. While her father ran a fruit and vegetable stall, her mother decided to join a group of women in the neighborhood in the stone-crushing business.

"Domestic work was not worth it," Monica says. " I could go the whole month without a salary. I had a very heavy workload but often I was not given food or sufficient clothing. I sometimes fell sick but my employer never cared about my health. After three months I decided to run away from my employer to join my mother at the stone-crushing sites."

"I have a sister and a young brother, but neither of them has proceeded with studies, and unfortunately, they didn't even complete standard seven. They are at 'Machimbo', helping our mother," Monica says.

"The health of more than 200 children helping their parents at 'Machimbo' is at great risk", observes Ms. Amina Mtunguja, coordinator of the Kibamku project. "There is a health risk currently looming here of which the government is not aware," she says.

If the government does not act immediately, many children will die of tuberculosis, malaria and other diseases resulting from fatigue. "To be honest, the children here face terrible health and social threats," Ms. Mtunguja remarks.

The plight of Monica and nine other young girls at the stone-crushing site, all former domestic child workers aged ten to 16, came to a happy ending when the Dogodogo Center, an IPEC implementing agency targeting children working under hazardous conditions in the urban informal sector in Dar-es-Salaam, visited Mtongani. The young girls were removed from the site, provided with rehabilitation and various types of training (depending on their ages), and were subsequently organized into a cooperative self-help group in November 1998.

"We 'tie and dye' clothes and produce batik," says Monica, now 15. "Presently we are facing market problems for our products as we are not selling much. However, I believe, sooner or later we will start earning more, as the number of our customers is gradually increasing."

"It's better that we can finally do a job like anybody else for ourselves. The previous one (domestic work) was terrible and you certainly would have not found us in this state."

"It was, terrible, terrible," another girl in the group chips in.

Monica's story represents the plight of girl-

child domestic workers, children trapped in one of the worst forms of child labor. Life as domestic servants is often so tough that they opt for other forms of employment, possibly more hazardous, elsewhere.

Monica and some of her colleagues now running the Kibamku project were lucky. But what of the many others who are still at the hands of the so-called domestic lords, suffering silently, struggling for their daily bread?

Talking about the Kibamku group, Ms. Mtunguja says, "At least, with these few, I can say they have been rescued, thanks to the Almighty God. But what is the fate of the others who are currently working in domestic service and elsewhere?"

Kenya: Utilizing the Grassroots Structure of Local Trade Unions in the Movement Against Child Labor

Francis Atwoli

Background

An estimated three million children between the ages of six and 14 work in Kenya, a large percentage of them in the potentially hazardous agricultural sector. Many do not go to school, or do not attend full-time. In addition, many parents cannot afford the cost of school fees or supplies. Furthermore, many families living in and around the project target areas felt that sending their children to work was of greater benefit than schooling.

During the past 18 months, the Nairobi Regional Office of the AFL-CIO American Center for International Labor Solidarity (Solidarity Center) has been collaborating with trade union organizations to assist in the IPEC-led effort to eliminate the worst forms of child labor in Kenya.

The child labor programs of the Solidarity Center in East Africa are action-oriented and focussed at the grassroots level. In addition to reducing the number of working children, the programs are designed to assist in returning working children to school, increasing and making better use of family incomes, and reducing poverty in the rural areas. An advocacy aspect encourages trade union and civil society organizations to address poverty and good governance issues.

On March 31, 2000, the Solidarity Center completed a one-year pilot project which assisted the Central Organization of Trade Unions (COTU-Kenya), the Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union (KPAWU) and the Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotel, Educational Institutions, Health and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA) in implementing a program in commercial agriculture. The project aimed to raise awareness about child labor, remove children from work and enroll them in school. Using the unique grassroots

structure of the trade unions, the program took a bottom-up approach, concentrating on ten target areas in the coffee and tea growing regions of Kenya. Families and working children in and around commercial agriculture, including domestic workers, were targeted.

Objectives

The project was intended to enlighten all individuals and groups in the target areas about the short and long-term hazards of child labor, and the resulting vicious circle of underdevelopment and child labor. The objective was to use the existing local trade union structure to create awareness among workers about child labor, focus on returning children to school by empowering communities, and create sustainable local partnerships with managers, teachers, parents, community leaders, health professionals, and other community members to take ownership for improving workers' economic conditions and encouraging them to send their children to school.

The program is based on the belief that awareness, motivation and empowerment through strategic planning methodologies, rather than direct cash payments for school expenses, lead to self-sustaining child labor programs.

Process

Addressing child labor in Africa is most efficiently done by mobilizing a broad alliance of partners and by giving emphasis to community-based interventions. The project uses the grass-roots trade union structure in the plantation sector to create a community-based approach to monitoring, awareness-raising and withdrawal. The project reaches families at the local level and trains and empowers them to create partnerships and strategies to combat child labor on and around the plantations. This approach also engenders local ownership and sustainability.

Twenty grassroots workshops of three days each trained over 550 trade union members, as well as managers, teachers, local chiefs, parents, religious leaders and other opinion makers. The grassroots workshops make use of strategic planning methodologies, and result in groups of participants returning to their coffee and tea estates with one year and ninety day plans of action. Over 30 formal follow-up sessions followed the grassroots workshops, and over

20,000 workers, managers, family members and guardians, teachers and community leaders have been reached. The project conducted over 50 monitoring visits which resulted in efforts to establish more than 100 "Community Child Labor Committees (CCLCs)." The committees are in various stages of development at the district and estate levels.

Challenges & Achievements

In addition to returning 340 children to school, the project was intended to create awareness about child labor. In order to do this, families had to be made aware about practical ways to reduce poverty and increase family well-being. Many of these efforts dealt with making the best use of family incomes, the establishment of micro-finance groups, self-help groups, income generating activities and bursary schemes. Forty micro-finance groups, called "merry-go-rounds," were formed, along with 132 self-help groups which had a combined membership of over 6,000 members. A newsletter in both English and Swahili is being produced to share successes and failures, and to motivate child labor activists.

A key to the success of the project has been awareness-raising at all levels, but primarily at the family, village and workplace level. Almost every aspect of the COTU/KPAWU/ Solidarity Center Project at the plantation, estate and village level is based on awareness-raising before finding means of returning children to school. It is believed that direct financial interventions to return children to school should be used only as a last resort. Rather, child labor committees at the district, village and estate level should be empowered to assist parents and guardians to form groups to mobilize resources to return children to school.

A summary of awareness-raising in the various target groups reached by the project follows:

Parents and Guardians

- BEFORE the project, the largely illiterate parents and guardians believed that it was acceptable for children from poor families to work in order to increase family income. Parents were not interested in sending children to school for many reasons, including the lack of employment opportunities for educated children.
- AFTER the project, parents in the ten target areas are aware that children have little chance for success in modern day Kenya unless they have a basic education. Parents are proud of the fact that their children are in school and will be able to compete for more rewarding jobs. With the assistance of the program, several groups of parents decided to establish literacy classes at the estate level.

Working Children

- BEFORE the project, with an estimated four million primary aged children in Kenya not attending school, it seemed normal to boys and girls in the ten target areas that they too were not going to school. It was normal to work, and nice to have some money for the family or for a few things that money could buy. Their highest aspiration was to get a permanent job on the local coffee estate, perhaps even become a driver.
- AFTER the project, children are aware that they can become a teacher, a pilot, an accountant or even a medical doctor. Children are aware that community-based efforts can lead to an education and a bright future. Former child laborers have formed support groups, and have joined the campaign against child labor. Some older youth have decided to follow in the foot steps of their parents, and have also begun literacy classes.

The Community

- BEFORE the project, the communities accepted child labor as a necessary evil due to poverty.

- AFTER the project, as a result of awareness-raising by CCLCs, attitudes have changed, and many efforts are made to enroll children in schools or to keep them from dropping out.

Teachers

- BEFORE the project, overworked and underpaid teachers had little time or energy for hungry children who didn't come to school. The problem was overwhelming.
- AFTER the project, teachers are aware that community-based efforts can effectively put many children into schools. Teachers have taken up leadership positions in the CCLCs, and are active in promoting self-help groups to generate income. In Limuru town, a teacher helped a group of AIDS orphans and others begin a rabbit project to help meet school expenses.

Union Leaders

- BEFORE the project, union leaders did not bother dealing with the "necessary evil." Clear information on child labor issues was not available. In any case, it was felt that child labor had little or nothing to do with the union except that those under 18 years of age could not join the union.
- AFTER the project, all union leaders are aware of the project "and are talking about it," says the General Secretary of KPAWU. It is now very clear that child labor is not wanted and can be dealt with through a union-led program. Leaders have become aware that activists, particularly women, can recruit workers into the union while eliminating child labor. During the one-year project, over 10,000 workers joined the union. Negotiators in a stronger KPAWU are now aware that child labor issues can be put on the bargaining table along with wages, hours and working conditions. Union leaders and workers are now more aware of the health hazards from pesticides, particularly for children.

Participants

- BEFORE the project, participants in the grass roots workshops were concerned but gave little thought to the "unsolvable problem."
- AFTER the project, most participants are aware that community groups can become forces in the fight against child labor and in the improvement of family life.

Estate Managers

- BEFORE the project, members of management saw child labor as traditional and resulting from poverty. Some saw it as a form of cheap, non-union labor. Others believed they were doing the families a favor by allowing their children to work.
- AFTER the project, many management personnel are aware of the destructive nature of child labor, and know that coordinated efforts can go a long way to eliminate it. Management is aware that unions can play a significant role in solving problems such as child labor. Management is aware of their tremendous influence for good when they help bridge the gap between management and workers.

Others

- BEFORE the project, an attitude of acceptance toward child labor was held by numerous persons, including government officials, politicians, opinion makers, religious leaders, workers in the informal sector and others.
- AFTER the project, the attitudes of all have not changed, but significant improvements have been made in raising awareness about the disadvantages of child labor and the importance of education.

One of the most significant results of the program was the involvement of communities in child labor issues. The CCLCs, in their various stages of development, continue to display a high degree of commitment and enthusiasm.

No changes were made to the basic bottom-up approach but a greater emphasis is presently being placed on the proper use of family income, and joining groups whose purpose is to mobilize funds to meet school expenses.

The program has received limited funding to increase the number of estate level CCLCs in the ten target areas in Kenya, and to expand to a few new areas. The KPAWU has agreed in principle to provide direct financial assistance to the CCLCs in the ten target areas of the project. The Solidarity Center is exploring more formal collaboration with ILO-IPEC, particularly to coordinate the program with the new IPEC education program. With the cooperation of the East African Trade Union Council (EATUC), an international effort will be made to harmonize child labor efforts at the East African Community level. The Grassroots Newsletter will become a regional publication. Coalitions with the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) and others will be formed to promote economic growth and good governance, both necessary to achieve free and compulsory primary education.

More emphasis will be placed on the sustainability of CCLCs and microfinance efforts. An internal evaluation of the program, conducted in April, showed that participants in the program recommend:

- More counseling for children and their parents;
- Better communication and transportation arrangements at the estate level;
- The inclusion of more religious leaders in the program;
- Improved monitoring at the estate level;
- The provision of written child labor materials in Kiswahili;
- The provision of information on HIV / AIDS to members of the CCLCs;
- The provision of ILO Conventions and detailed child labor material to teachers;
- The provision of identity cards for child labor facilitators on the estates; and

- Provisions for direct intervention to get extremely needy children into school, particularly AIDS orphans.

Lessons Learned

- Programs must put emphasize on using existing local trade union structures as an effective means of mobilizing grassroots community involvement in taking children out of work and putting them in school.
- By using a multi-union approach, the strengths of different types of unions can be brought together to provide maximum results. The unions being used have as their members agricultural workers, teachers, domestic workers, local government workers, university staff and others.
- Solidarity Center coordination teaches local unions how to create community-based child labor programs, work in partnership with NGOs, employers and other relevant community leaders, and build local union capacity to effectively sustain existing community-based structures.

This approach is transferrable to other countries where there is a local agricultural union. The newly trained union activists in Kenya are now in a position to assist other unions in Africa to establish similar programs.

Francis Atwoli is a lifelong trade union activist. In 1997, he was elected Executive Board Member of the Central Organization of Trade Unions in Kenya, having also served as the Director of Organization. Mr. Atwoli was elected General Secretary of the Kenya Plantation and Agricultural Workers' Union in 1994, a position he continues to hold. He has attended numerous courses and seminars on labor and industrial relations and has traveled extensively throughout his career.

Panel B: Implementing Effective Strategies in the Workforce

Bangladesh: A Multilateral Collaboration to Eliminate Child Labor in the Export-Oriented Garment Industry

Anisur Rahman Sinha

Automobile theoretical class in progress at UCFP.

Background

The garment industry in Bangladesh has enjoyed meteoric growth, from less than 50 factories in 1983 to over 2,800 in 1999. During the same period, employment rose from 10,000 to 1.5 million, of which 80 percent are female workers. At the same time, garment exports increased in value of US$31 million to US$4.02 billion. This represents approximately 66 percent of the country's exports, 43 percent of which go to the United States.

Concern about the number of children employed in the industry led to the introduction of the Harkin Bill in the United States government in early 1993. The bill called for an immediate ban on the import of goods manufactured wholly, or in part, by child labor. The bill sent shock waves through the Bangladeshi garment industry. Factory owners, in an effort to avoid jeopardizing their positions, began dismissing child workers en masse.

Objectives

In October 1994, the ILO and UNICEF received a written appeal from 53 Bangladeshi children. In response, the ILO, UNICEF and several NGOs urged BGMEA not to dismiss child workers until a school system and other social protection measures were in place. Intense negotiations between the parties concerned led to an MOU, which was signed in July 1995 by BGMEA, ILO and UNICEF. The Government of Bangladesh, as well as the United States Embassy, was actively involved in the process, and continue to support its aims and objectives.

The Memorandum of Understanding, known as "The Placement of Child Workers in School Programs and the Elimination of Child Labor," covers the following key elements:

- An initial fact-finding survey;
- A special education program for former working children;
- Monitoring and verification in the garment factories;
- Income compensation for children attending school classes;
- Skills training; and
- Micro credit and entrepreneurship training.

Process

The fact-finding survey was conducted in 1995 and revealed a total of 9,546 child workers in the garment industry. Child labor in this sector is negligible compared with the vast numbers of children working in the informal and agricultural sectors in Bangladesh, but as garment exports are vital to the economy, success in reducing or eliminating child labor will clearly have major implications elsewhere and provide leverage for IPEC and other players to implement child labor elimination projects in the country.

UNICEF took on the three-year Non-Formal Educational component in association with two national NGOs, and financial commitments were made by all partner agencies.

Through the BGMEA / ILO / UNICEF Child Labour Project, a verification system was designed and set up and ILO monitors were specially trained to carry out continuous unannounced visits in all BGMEA member factories and verify school attendance.

To provide partial compensation for income loss, a stipend of Tk. 300 (approximately 6 US$) per month was agreed upon for each child withdrawn and placed into the informal education program.

To oversee and coordinate implementation of the MOU, a local Steering Committee was set up with members from BGMEA, UNICEF and ILO. Representatives from the Ministry of Labor and the United States Embassy became regular observers. The committee's objective was to ensure

Iarek working out a math problem at school.

tight coordination and deal decisively with non-compliance and punitive measures.

Challenges & Achievements

Since the project's initiation in late 1995, the following achievements were made:

- More than 8,200 former child workers have received non-formal education.
- 2,000 children continue formal education.
- Since 1995, the percentage of garment factories using child labor was reduced as follows: 43 percent of all factories in 1995; 34 percent in 1996; 11 percent in 1997; five percent in 1998; and three percent at the end of 1999.
- 680 former child workers received vocational training.
- A further 148 former child workers will receive vocational training.
- A database developed by IPEC provides a system for the random selection of factories to be visited each day by project managers.
- Close cooperation between the three signatories and the support of the government and the United States Embassy.

A key to success was BGMEA's role in convincing the majority of its members to cooperate with the monitoring teams. The composition of the monitoring teams and the social communication skills of the 50 monitors was also instrumental: each team consists of one government inspector, one BGMEA and two IPEC monitors. Their aim has been to win confidence, not to act as policemen, verifying compliance with the provisions of the MOU, while advising on ways and means to do so and informing manu-

facturers of the benefits of the program. The number of visits to factories in Dhaka and Chittagong increased from 1,609 in 1996, to 4,542 in 1997, to 6,104 in 1998, to 7,373 in 1999. Monitoring is daily and sites are randomly selected.

Awareness-raising has been an essential part of the project. Publicity campaigns have informed not only the Bangladeshi public but have also attracted international interest in the new program model.

In two major 1997 conferences on child labor, held in Amsterdam and Oslo, the program's importance as a replicable model was emphasized. The signing of an agreement between the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), the ILO and UNICEF in Atlanta in 1997, to phase out child labor in the soccer ball industry in Pakistan, is considered to be a replication of the BGMEA model. Inspired by this project, a large European-based fashion company is now running a skills training center for former garment industry working children and has placed them at factories after completion of the program. The project has also served as a model for projects in Pakistan, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Honduras.

Lessons Learned

The main lessons are that:

- With the commitment of the involved partners, a considerable reduction in the number of employed children can be achieved in the industrial sector within a few years.
- Success lies in an independent, credible, transparent monitoring and verification system.
- To ensure the sustainability of the monitoring and verification system, efforts need to be made to build up a private sector-based quality assurance system, as well as provide capacity building for law enforcement bodies.
- Although income compensation options are limited, a viable income loss alternative is crucial for the acceptance of the former child worker to participate in the rehabilitation

program.

- Funding for all segments of a project must be obtained up-front.
- Implementing partners need to exchange and process the child-related data on a common electronic platform.
- To minimize the number of non-compliance cases and at the same time sustain the rehabilitation opportunities for a former child worker, the defaulting factory should be obliged to cover the rehabilitation cost for the identified child.

Mr. Anisur Rahman Sinha, the chairman of the Opex Group, is currently serving a two-year term as the President of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers' and Exporters' Association (BGMEA), a mandatory organization for exporting garment manufacture employers. For the last three years, the Opex Group has won the Bangladeshi Government gold trophy for export performance. Exports of the Opex Group total well over $100 million a year, and the Group employs more than 25,000 people.

A Closer Look: Reaching for Bigger Dreams

by Aasha Amin Mehreen

Salma is a lively 15-year-old former garment worker who wants to study at least until the tenth grade so that she can get a reasonably well-paid job. Only a few years ago such aspirations were beyond her wildest dreams. At age 11, poverty forced her to take on the job of an adult, working from eight in the morning to ten at night, seven days a week, at a crowded garment factory. Her monthly salary was only TK400 (US$8).

Then Salma's life took a different turn. In 1993, in reaction to a bill proposed by US Senator Harkin that called for an immediate ban on the import of garments made with child labor, garment manufacturers panicked and dismissed thousands of child workers in Bangladesh. Children like Salma were faced with destitution and the prospect of working in hazardous occupations in order to make a living. However, the combined effects of the Bangladeshi government's 1994 commitment to the eventual elimination of child labor, and a 1995 Memorandum of Understanding between the BGMEA, the ILO and UNICEF, meant that in the long term, Salma and her family's lives would positively change.

All child garment workers in the rehabilitation program are entitled to basic primary education at various non-formal schools set up by two partner NGOs: Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC), and Gono Shastha Shangstha (GSS) or Popular Health Organization. In addition, children aged 14 and above are able to attend school as well as work under the 'Earn and Learn' program, or receive skills training. At present there are about 196 MOU schools, 122 run by BRAC and 74 by GSS. A stipend of TK 300 (US$8) per month is paid to those who regularly attend school.

At the Probhatibagh school run by BRAC, pupils are given lessons in basic reading, writing, mathematics and science. Salma can now read story books on her own, write letters for her parents and neighbors and be sure to get the correct change from shopkeepers. She learns about the environment, her rights as a child and about basic health and hygiene. She also can take part in informal singing and dancing lessons. All this has had a remarkable effect on her. She is more self-assured, assertive and independent. Salma's sister Rabeya, a former garment worker who entered the program with Salma, goes to the same non-formal school.

Financially, the consolidated income of the entire family has increased, improving their standard of living. Salma and Rabeya both get almost double their previous salaries. Now of the legal working age, Salma has a job through the "Earn and Learn" scheme at a garment factory, where she works from 11 in the morning to eight at night after her lessons at school. She gets one Friday off every month.

Salma's mother, Zubaida, has been working at a garment factory ever since her two daughters started going to school. "I don't have to worry about them so much now," says Zubaida. "Thanks to the program my daughters will now be educated and be able to stand on their own two feet." Personally, she too has benefitted. Apart from the added income, Salma reads and writes letters for her mother and helps to keep the accounts. "She tells us about all the things that she learns in school such as the importance of good hygiene," Zubaida remarks proudly. Recently, to the delight of the family, the two sisters' used some of their savings to buy a color TV.

Skills training for those aged 14 and above is another important component of the program. Tarek is a 15-year-old who wants, more than anything, to learn everything there is to know about cars. He entered the garment industry when he was only 12 because his widowed mother could not earn enough to support herself and her two children. Tarek enrolled in the Prabhatibagh school in 1996. Now that he is over 14, Tarek is qualified for skills training under the UNICEF funded program, run by two NGOs. After school, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Tarek goes to a training center in Mirpur to be trained in car maintenance.

Thanks to the education scheme, Tarek can read and write as well as make practical plans for the future. "As soon as I finish fifth grade I will start working in a garage. I would have liked to study more but I must start earning to help my mother."

Pakistan: Eliminating Child Labor in the Soccer Ball Industry

Aseema Zahoor

Background

Sialkot is situated in the extreme northeast corner of the province of Punjab. With a population of more than 2.6 million, the average Sialkot family has seven persons. It has thriving industries involving the manufacture of sporting goods, surgical instruments and leather. All three industries employ child workers. In 1996 to 1997 Sialkot exported Rs. 3,882.17 million worth of soccer balls, the figure rising to Rs. 5,057.42 million (some US$100 million) in 1997 to 1998.

A child labor survey carried out in 1996 by IPEC found that, of the 40 million Pakistani children aged five to 14, 8.3 percent (3.3 million) were economically active on a nearly full-time basis. Of these, some 70 percent worked as unpaid family helpers in order to assist in household enterprises. Nearly half the child labor force in Pakistan works more than 35 hours per week. A sizeable number work 56 hours or more. Of these, nearly 7,000 lived and worked in Sialkot in 1997, and nearly two-thirds of them were illiterate. Parents often believe that it is best for their children to work, to supplement family income.

Until the early 1970s, soccer ball stitching was carried out in factories in and around the city by regular paid employees. Then, manufacturers started decentralizing production. Workers began to take some of their work home, where they were assisted by the rest of the family, including children. Home-based family stitching units were born and quickly mushroomed. In 1995, news reports about sporting goods manufacturing involving child labor began to appear.

On 14 February 1997, the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI), the ILO and UNICEF signed a Partners' Agreement in Atlanta to develop and implement a Plan of Action to diminish child labor in the soccer ball industry in Sialkot. Save the Children-UK was also invited by the Atlanta signatories to join the partnership for the cause.

Objectives

The objectives were to:

1. Prevent and progressively eliminate child labor in the manufacture or assembly of soccer balls in Sialkot and its environs;
2. Identify and remove children under the age of 14 from work and provide them with education and other opportunities; and
3. Facilitate changes in community and family attitudes toward child labor.

Process

The project has two main components: Prevention and Monitoring, and Social Protection.

Manufacturers are invited to voluntarily join the program and incorporate the children in a Social Protection Program. Participating manufacturers register their contractors or subcontractors and complete an Internal Monitoring process to record information about their stitching centers and the stitchers working there. This information is passed on to IPEC for independent or External Monitoring. Participating manufacturers are required to shift 100 percent of their production within 18 months to stitching centers that can be conspicuously monitored.

Seven ILO teams, of two members each, carry out the external monitoring. Presently, there are 15 monitors, seven of whom are female. Female monitors are required, as male and females stitchers work either in separate facilities or separate rooms.

The Social Protection and Rehabilitation Program consists of prevention, rehabilitation, and awareness-raising and is run by the Bunyad Literacy Community Council (BLCC), which has expertise and experience in non-formal educa-

tion. The priority target group is those children and their families who are affected by the Prevention and Monitoring program. The program also focuses on the younger siblings of the target group of working children.

Challenges & Achievements

The first phase was completed on 31 March 1999. Thirty-nine manufacturers had joined the program. The SCCI and IPEC agreed to extend the monitoring component until 31 October 1999, in order to be in sync with the social protection component. In September 1999, an external independent evaluation was undertaken and recommended extension of the project for a second phase of two years. This phase will be one of consolidation and of making the initiative sustainable.

In the extended period, as an incentive to attract all soccer ball manufacturers, the SCCI has reduced the joining fee for the new manufacturers to Rs. 15,000 (from Rs. 100,000). The response from smaller manufacturers has been very positive. By the middle of February 2000, 65 manufacturers had joined voluntarily. IPEC is now monitoring 100 percent of production in more than 1,799 stitching centers, which include around 1,058 stitching centers for females. In addition there are 25 combined centers where males and females work on the same premises but in different rooms. In order to bring all stitching activities into the monitoring net, the IPEC team has also started area-based monitoring and has issued individual identification codes to all participating manufacturers. These codes are printed inside the ball on a specific panel and help identify any leakage of stitching work to unregistered work places, and allow IPEC to gather information on manufacturers who have not yet joined the program.

By mid-February 2000, monitors had carried out 12,670 random visits to 24,956 stitching centers. IPEC also monitors the stitching activities of participating manufacturers in neighboring districts.

BLCC has set up 185 non-formal education centers, known as Umang Taleemi Centers (UTCs), which provide opportunities for working children to receive primary education. A total of 6,019 children have been enrolled at these UTCs. In addition, 185 teachers engaged by BLCC for UTCs have

been provided with first-aid training. Teams of doctors also visit the UTCs for medical examination of the children enrolled and provide medical treatment as necessary.

In addition to education and health facilities, BLCC has developed programs for vocational and skills training, and has initiated a program for credit and savings schemes. This will help those families affected by the Prevention and Monitoring Program to enhance their income.

UNICEF aims to achieve 100 percent enrollment of all children in the "four to seven years" age group in primary schools. Through an NGO, Save the Children-UK has introduced micro-credit schemes to the male and female adults of families whose children were withdrawn from work. Save the Children, through another partner NGO, is also enhancing the social and physical infrastructure of the government primary schools with active community involvement.

In the next phase, IPEC will consolidate the internal and external monitoring system and work with partners to set up an independent and credible local monitoring agency that will continue after the program has been phased out in 2001.

Lessons Learned

- Partnership between international agencies, national and local NGOs and the business community is essential.
- Voluntary partnership makes stakeholders responsible, which is a key to sustainability.
- The program must be an agent for change.
- On-site regular and area-based monitoring by IPEC monitoring teams is worthwhile and replicable.
- Helping the industry organize itself leads to reduced instances of child labor.
- Families and communities want greater educational opportunities.

Aseema Zahoor has been working with the IPEC soccer ball project in Sialkot since its implementation in 1997. She acts as a monitor for the project in soccer ball stitching centers to ensure that abusive child labor is not being used in the soccer ball industry. She also works with area stitchers to raise awareness of the problems associated with child labor and to encourage them to get involved in sending children to school. She holds a master's degree in economics from Punjab University in Lahore.

A Closer Look: Light in Bhagwal Awan

by Salman Rashid

Bhagwal Awan, just outside Sialkot, had a large concentration of football stitching families living near the poverty line. Typically, every able-bodied man, woman and child in these families worked. Children's education was not a priority. Riffat Tahira a teacher at a Umang Taleemi Center (UTC) or informal school encouraging children to pursue an education is a major part of the job.

One of her students was the bright-eyed and intelligent Farzana, a live wire of a girl, about 11 years old. From a football stitching family, she had never been to school, and acquiring mastery over the printed word gave her an immense sense of achievement. This was something to be shared with friends. So, she says, she took her friend Samina "by the hand as she sat there stitching footballs," and led her to school. Samina, shy, withdrawn and quiet, was the exact opposite of the energetic Farzana. Also from a family of football stitchers, Samina had attended school earlier, but dropped out because of the unimaginative system of exams and abuse in which she had failed and lost heart.

Shortly after she joined the informal school in early 1998, Samina's father fell terminally ill. The family's stitching enterprise also came to an end with the establishment of formal stitching centers that took away all the work. As far as Samina was concerned this spelled doom for her family.

They say misfortunes never come in ones or twos but in droves, and within months Samina's ailing father passed away. With the head of the family gone and no stitching work to be had, Samina's elder 21 year old brother, who works in a factory for surgical goods for a meager Rs. 1200 per month, became the only breadwinner for this family of eight.

In these bleak circumstances, in May 1999 Samina's teacher told her mother, Khadija, about the loan scheme that was a part of the informal education program for families in financial need. Khadija was averse to the idea of a loan, for she well knew the cumbersome paperwork and the back breaking interest that kept poor borrowers in perpetual bondage. It took a while for her to be convinced that things were slightly different in this program.

Only after four months of saving and scrimping could Khadija raise the requisite Rs. 800 (about US$16) to provide the collateral and get a loan of Rs. 6,000 to set up her younger son in his hair cutting and hamam (hot baths) business. Within days his daily take-home income was hovering at about Rs. 200. For the family in the depths of abject poverty only weeks ago, this was a monumental change–and it was to get better. "With the advent of winter the hot baths become even busier and," says Khadija with visible pride, "the income jumped threefold." The initial worry of paying the monthly installment of Rs. 580 receded. Today she does not even mind the fact that she has to pay Rs. 960 as interest against the loan.

And what of the two little girls, diametrically opposed in temperament yet bonded by the covenant of friendship? "We used to take turns at playing teacher and student," says Farzana brightly. In their game the teacher was a stick wielding monster. But now they are students for real, and the stereotype of the wicked teacher has been overhauled. In two years Samina has raced through five grades of normal school and will be taking the primary level examination in the third week of March to join a mainstream school.

The high school exam is the target for the girls right now. "But if we get the chance, we'll both do sixteen grades," declares Farzana. The master's degree is a long way off, and the girls don't yet know the name for it. But their hankering for knowledge has been kindled and there is little doubt that, given half a chance, these two bright sparks will get into college.

Khadija now has all her younger children in school and she values literacy. "Two years of government school could not even teach my Samina the Urdu alphabet. But two years in Riffat's school, and she can read letters from relatives."

Had it not been for this intervention, Khadija has no doubt that her family would have been forced into unimaginable misery.

Central America: Cooperative Effort to End Child Labor in the Coffee Industry

Rijk van Haarlem

Background

Child labor is a growing phenomenon in Central America. It is estimated that more than two million children between the ages of five and 15 work. Many Central American economies are predominantly based on agriculture and are dependent on agricultural exports. Consequently, a high percentage of the labor force in the region is found in the agricultural sector. It is estimated that in the six countries (Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic) participating in the project, a total of 800,000 children and adolescents work in the agricultural sector.

Due to the high demand for labor during the harvesting season, the coffee sector traditionally employs many migrant workers. Large plantations usually employ workers hired from within the coffee-growing region, but in peak harvesting season, they also use national or foreign migrant workers. Small producers often involve all family members in the production of coffee as well as migrant workers. In this context, child labor is often perceived as an important contribution to family income because income is based on production.

Children who work on coffee plantations face many safety and health risks. Fatigue is a big problem. Children carry heavy or oversized loads of coffee beans. In addition to injuries, they may suffer from respiratory, dermatological, and other illnesses, as they often work without protective clothing or adequate working tools and may be regularly exposed to toxic chemicals, pesticides, and disease-carrying insects.

The long working hours and seasonal nature of coffee production frequently interfere with children's enrollment and

school attendance. Academic performance is generally poor. Some coffee plantations in Guatemala and El Salvador have established schools for children of their workers. In most cases, however, the lack of available schools or education centers near plantations and farms makes school attendance impossible. In addition, a number of parents do not value education.

Prior to the IPEC program, projects to raise awareness about the problem of child labor were implemented to mobilize governmental institutions and the community at large. Various action programs providing direct assistance to working children and their families were developed and implemented. Coffee associations or councils in some countries have established social programs, including rural education programs benefitting children and families living in the coffee-growing regions.

Some progress toward the effective elimination of child labor is being made in Central America. However, specific actions to prevent, withdraw, and rehabilitate working children from hazardous or full-time work on coffee plantations are needed. Projects that tackle child labor with concerted actions involving coffee producers, government institutions, NGOs, communities and parents are the only answer.

With this in mind, IPEC and USDOL developed a subregional project to address the problem. The initial steps to develop such a unique project, which covers a large geographical area, were made by the regional IPEC office in Costa Rica in consultation with IPEC Geneva and DOL. In early 1999, associations of coffee growers and leading NGOs in six countries of the region were approached and consulted about the feasibility and the strategy of a subregional project, aimed at the progressive elimination of child labor in the coffee sector in their respective countries. The response was very positive. The project, which will have a duration of two years, started on November 15, 1999. To date, the project has secured a manager, identified

its implementing agencies and intends to begin its social protection components during the last quarter of calendar year 2000.

Objectives

The project aims at the withdrawal of 20,000 children from full-time work in two years.

Process

The project will follow the same strategies as in other IPEC child labor projects focused on a particular sector, i.e., social rehabilitation, placement of children in schools, and protection of working children and their families combined with a monitoring and verification system.

The actions are:

- During the first three months, a baseline survey conducted to assess the extent of child labor, to identify the target groups and to produce information upon which a monitoring and verification system can be based.
- At the conclusion of the survey, a planning meeting held with all participants to fine-tune their respective activities in implementing the project using the outcome of the survey.
- At the conclusion of the survey, social protection measures for (ex)working children, their siblings, and their families included education programs, health and nutrition programs and recreation programs.
- Awareness-raising programs implemented to change attitudes and perceptions about child labor and to mobilize society to take action against it.
- Concrete action by, and support of, coffee producers and plantation owners mobilized in the prevention of child labor and withdrawal of children from full-time and hazardous work.
- Viable income replacement mechanisms provided, which will include training of parents

in income-generating activities for selected families.

- An independent workplace monitoring system established to verify that identified working children are phased out of the coffee industry and provided with viable alternatives, and that they do not return to work. The monitoring system is in operation not earlier than three months after the start of the social protection program, to make sure that the children can enroll in the schools or education centers established under the project.
- The monitoring system operates as follows:
  - Monitors operate in teams of two;
  - The area of operation should be divided into zones;
  - Each team is assigned to a zone;
  - The teams are rotated over the zones on a regular basis;
  - Monitoring visits are unannounced;
  - Each monitoring site, plantation, family or school will be visited with reasonable frequency;
  - Information gathered during the monitoring visits will be stored in a data base on a day-to-day basis; and
  - Addresses of locations to be visited should be generated by a database in such a way that no addresses are left out.

Reliable and transparent monitoring is considered vital to ensure a measurable impact on the target children and their families. The system will use the same strategies applied in the IPEC projects in the garment industry in Bangladesh and the soccer ball and carpet projects in Pakistan. IPEC monitors will ensure a gradual and systematic phasing out of identified children from full-time and hazardous work and prevent new children from entering. The system will

involve labor inspectors and officials from other governmental institutions, as well as the facilitation of access by representatives of the coffee associations.

However, in this project, monitoring visits will be conducted not only to coffee factories and big plantations, but also to small (and often family-owned) plantations and to families working in the coffee industry. Therefore, the monitors in this project will interact more with the community and families, than with their colleagues in Bangladesh. This will require specific skills.

The ILO/IPEC monitoring teams will be composed of people with a bachelor's degree in one of the social sciences and with experience in fieldwork, preferably surveys. The team members will receive training in monitoring child labor and will preferably be gender balanced.

The coffee association representatives are cooperating and involved in the implementation of the project. They will facilitate access to the monitoring sites (plantations and families). However, they are not directly involved in the monitoring system, as is the case in the BGMEA project in Bangladesh, where BGMEA monitors are members of the joint ILO/BGMEA/GOB monitoring teams.

The monitoring system will also promote the participation of community organizations, whose representatives will be trained to follow up on the status of ex-working children or those at risk, as well as on the situation of their families. They will provide reports to ILO/IPEC on a regular basis.

The community monitors will also participate in regular meetings with the chief monitor and/or the ILO monitors. In these "coordinating" meetings, the findings and observations of the community monitors will be discussed. The information obtained from the community monitors will be verified by the ILO monitors during visits to the families and plantations and processed in the system.

To ensure sustainability, it is essential that the labor inspectorates participate. The respective Ministries have been requested to make labor inspectors available to accompany the monitoring teams during their visits one day per week.

At the same time labor inspectors will be trained for "on the job" inspections of child labor and working conditions. The response of the respective Ministries of Labor in the participating countries has been positive.

Labor inspectors and other government officials, who are part of the monitoring system, will also be requested to attend the training sessions. The course will be refreshed once or twice during the project, or when deemed necessary. In addition, each national chief monitor will be trained to train representatives of the community groups in the use of monitoring formats, and in sensitization on child labor issues.

The monitoring teams in the participating countries work under the guidance of a chief monitor and will report on a weekly basis to that person. Their computerized reports will contain information including the number of visits conducted, locations, number of children identified, progress of their phasing out from work, and school attendance.

Rijk van Haarlem is the IPEC Chief Technical Adviser for the Sub-regional Projects in the Coffee Industry and Commercial Agriculture in Central America. He has considerable experience in the field with IPEC and was instrumental in setting up major IPEC projects in Bangladesh and Pakistan, upon which the Central America coffee project is based. He is an engineer by training and a former Dutch government employee.

A Closer Look: Coffee's Children

by Maite Puertes

Turrialba is one of the main coffee-growing regions in Costa Rica. The town is only 40 miles from the capital, but the climate and the landscape are typically "coffee."

In Turrialba, coffee is more than just a product, it's a way of life. Even school vacations are arranged to coincide with the harvest. Juan Carlos Camacho, Director of the Agriculture Ministry Office and Coordinator of Turrialba's Agricultural Sector, explains that "the harvesting season lasts more or less from November through February, though this period changes depending on the rains, the altitude of the cultivated area or the variety of the beans." This is why the harvesting season is usually longer than school vacation. It is estimated that during the harvest there are over 10,000 children and teenagers who work with their parents or combine school and coffee-harvesting.

Some 40 percent of Costa Rica's coffee comes from a mix of big plantations and small holdings. Turrialba is no exception. On the one hand are the plantations, which operate like feudal domains –on the other, there are small and medium-sized holdings, a result of recent agrarian reform that gave land to the workers. Child labor exists in both environments.

Aquiares, with 700 hectares, is one of Turrialba's biggest plantations. Its 1,200 inhabitants make up 300 families, many of whom work on the plantation. Aquiares, though similar to other plantations in the area, is somewhat better off. The inhabitants own their houses, sold to them by the coffee grower eight years ago. The harvesters work in the fields five months a year.

Celia Barquero is a teacher in Aquiares Public School, where 180 children are enrolled. Primary school pupils are experienced in harvesting coffee. Adrián, six years old, comments, "I pick coffee with my mama and my papa. I wake up at five and go with them. I pick a little, I don't work much, I'd rather go to school, because I learn there." This opinion is shared by his companions. Alba, also six, says: "I'd rather come to school because I learn; picking coffee is rather boring . . . and I get tired and snakes can
bite me."

"I think that if the families had more resources they wouldn't use children's labor," the teacher tells us, "but if the children want Christmas they have to go for the coffee to earn their toys, Christmas clothes, and school supplies." But school depends on the harvest too. "Every year we take the children coffee picking for three days, and with what we earn we can buy a television and a video player for the school," the teacher explains.

The immigrants' story is of a different kind. The fact that coffee is a seasonal product implies the need for casual labor, with Nicaraguans being the largest group. These immigrants often travel with their families. The big plantations provide accommodation in baches, small barracks of 36 square feet, in which two families of six share a kitchen and a bathroom in inhuman conditions. Lack of hygiene spreads disease and the way of life causes tensions, which is a source of social unrest in the area. Joaquín Aguilar, psychologist of the National Foundation for Childhood in Turrialba, explains that "there are some people who make huge profits out of the miserable conditions of national and foreign families. The baches are a violation of the human rights for both adults and children. Public bodies cannot cope."

The majority of immigrants are illegal. This situation forces them to accept the hard conditions that employers impose on them. Marta Avilés and Sebastián Rivera live in a bache at Hacienda La Isabel with their five children, between two and 14 years old. The family has recently arrived in Costa Rica. They came in search of work and with the aim of settling down if they get their legal papers. While the father looks for a job, the children stay at home. Esther, ten years old, attended school in Nicaragua, but is not yet enrolled in Costa Rica. Her sister, who is eight years old, has not yet attended any school. "She can't see well," says the father, "she needs glasses." The mother says, "The house is just a small room and we don't fit in. The children? There's no money, so they can't study."

In Turrialba's Yama settlement a group of families own small plots, thanks to a recent land reappropriation. The facilities in this settlement are basic, and families live from coffee-

growing. Martín Pérez and Lorena Céspedes have four sons, between two and nine years old. The father, who owns a plot of 1.5 hectares, comments, "Children don't go picking coffee. Why? Because it's too far, an hour's walk." Toni, Martín's son, talks to us about how hard it is working in the coffee fields. He rises at five a.m., walks for an hour with his father to the plantation, works until 1:00 p.m. and then returns home on foot. The other children in Yama work too. Faced with the question about what they prefer, coffee bean picking or school, the answer is unanimous. They'd rather study.

Turrialba's mayor, Edgar Mata, points out that "child labor has a positive effect on family economics, but in the long term it's harmful, because children leave school and they'll become citizens without studies. It's not true that family ties are tightened."

Guatemala: Finding a Long-Term Solution to Child Labor in the Coffee Sector

William Hempstead Smith

Background

Guatemala is roughly the size of Ohio, has a population of 11 million, and has coffee as its principal export to major markets such as the USA, Europe and Japan.

There are 60,000 coffee growers, 55,000 of whom are small producers. During harvesting time in October, November and December, families forsake their farms in the highlands and migrate to pick coffee. Though it is school vacation time, the whole family works.

Children do not add value to the work with any special dexterity, nor do they add value to the coffee itself. They simply supplement family income. There are no contractual arrangements with the children, only with the father. The children also assist with harvesting the crops of corn and black beans on the family farm.

Process

In April 1999, AMACA, the coffee association, teamed up with IPEC to provide a long-term solution to child labor. The coffee project is multi-sectoral, covering health, education and alternative income, and will also carry out awareness-raising in the coffee sector. Funding is in place. A pilot project will be run by the Department of San Marcos in northwest Guatemala and will look at where the migrants come from and where they go to pick the coffee. The study will be carried out by a local university and the monitoring will last for two years.

Funrural was established in 1994 to implement projects in health and education in rural areas, specifically, though not exclusively, in the coffee sector. It works with its own funds and cooperates with NGOs and the government. Funrural will implement the education segment of the proj-

ect and demonstrate how it can be carried out.

Ideally, Funrural would like only the father in the family to migrate during the harvesting season, leaving mother and children at home. The Catholic Church will be responsible for implementing alternative income projects for families. Funrural itself would prefer to see the focus entirely on education and not just see children shifting from work in the coffee plantations to weaving baskets for tourists. Funrural is promoting the objectives of the project to the coffee sector to show that the solution is not contrary to the sector's needs.

As regards awareness-raising, IPEC has selected the media in San Marcos as its target. Health issues will be undertaken by the NGO Project Hope and will focus on mothers and children.

The Guatemalan coffee sector is looking for a comprehensive and long-term solution, which is why education has such a key role, offering children the chance to aspire to greater things and break the cycle of poverty and labor.

William Hempstead Smith is the Vice-President of Funrural, the Guatemalan Foundation for Rural Development.

Turkey: Using Training to Promote Local Ownership of Interventions to Eliminate Child Labor

Dr. Irfan Yazman

Background

Child laborers in Turkey are predominantly employed in small-size enterprises. Typical employment conditions for children (90 percent of whom are boys) include long hours and low rates of pay in jobs that are not suitable for their physical and mental development or skill levels. The majority of production techniques used in these enterprises are traditional, and acquisition of vocational skills occurs in an environment where planned industrial development is almost nonexistent. Children can register with a Ministry of National Education Apprenticeship Training Center (ATC) for training and enroll in the social security system. But ATCs are only attended by 24 percent of Turkey's child laborers. The remaining 76 percent of the working children are not protected by any social security system.

The Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Handicrafts (TESK) is Turkey's professional association for small and medium-sized enterprises (SME). It represents four million employers, a number that reflects the fragmentation of the industrial sector within Turkey. Recognizing the need to improve both the quality of vocational training received by children and working conditions in SMEs, TESK established Work Place Inspection and Consultation Groups (IDDGs) and an accompanying fund.

There are now 3,000 IDDGs nation-wide, each having at least five members. Their establishment was an important milestone that gave TESK members, on their own initiative, the opportunity to take ownership of the process of monitoring the quality of vocational training. This is the first non-governmental inspection unit in Turkey.

IDDGs provide an excellent opportunity for cooperation between IPEC and TESK to achieve common goals in combating the problems associated with child labor in Turkey. TESK first approached the ILO in 1994 to ask for support in the training of IDDGs. The question, therefore, was "How can TESK best gear its IDDG activities to meet the needs of

working children in SMEs?" With IPEC support, an Action Program was implemented in 1995. As a follow up, in 1996 through 1997, a further program was designed to prepare a manual for IDDGs, to equip them with the necessary skills and materials for promoting the improvement of conditions of working youth.

This groundwork led to the "Training of IDDGs" program.

Objectives

The main objective of the "Training of IDDGs" program was to support the creation of a core group of trainers to give the subsequent training to 230 IDDGs. The rationale behind the training program was to maximize the impact on the situation of working youth including improving working conditions for youth 15 and older, and referring children under 15 to the primary education system. It was designed to provide systematic and uniform training in order to utilize existing experience and competencies and enable IDDGs to develop the cooperation and support necessary among all those with input to the situation of youth working in SMEs.

The key strategies adopted were capacity building, youth's participation, and a multi-sectoral approach. Expected outcomes of the program included, in the short term, an increase in the capacity of the IDDGs and, in the long term, improvement of conditions for all working youth nation-wide.

Process

The program had a number of interdependent components. In the first phase, a "Training of Trainers course" was provided to a core group of 30 TESK staff to strengthen IDDG structure after the phasing out of IPEC support. An integrated training module was prepared in cooperation with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security and ATCs, with materials adapted to the needs and conditions of prospective trainees.

The second phase targeted 230 IDDGs, who received training from the TESK staff who had completed the first phase with support from the Ministry of Labor Inspectorate, whose cooperation had been incorporated into the program

from its initial stages.

Challenges & Achievements

Since the phasing out of IPEC support, an additional 1,170 IDDGs have been trained by the original core group. The presence of this training force has dramatically increased the reach of the initial program and therefore directly affected a significantly greater number of youth. Since field implementation started in 1999, 5,000 working youth between the ages of 15 to 18 have been directed into the Ministry of National Education ATC system, leading to reduced working hours for children.

The program also had a major impact on working conditions. As a result of IDDG fieldwork, the periodic medical screening of working youth was ensured. Both children and employers increased their knowledge on work health and safety issues, and employers began to establish health centers in industrials areas.

One of the crucial roles of IDDGs is in the area of compulsory primary education. In cooperation with the Ministry of National Education, effective mechanisms will be devised to identify and direct working children under the age of 15 into the primary education system.

The additional 1,500 IDDGs within Turkey are scheduled to receive training in a program planned to start in September 2000. The successful completion of this program will mean that the initial training initiative has become mainstreamed within Turkey's most influential body of employers.

In addition to these easily quantifiable results, the project has contributed to the strength of the IDDG concept in the national context and helped establish a culture of pro-action which has the potential to significantly alter the dynamic of the child labor concerns within Turkey. The parallel development of the knowledge base, attitude and skills of IDDGs has significantly increased the demand for further training. An analysis of the evaluation reports submitted by IDDGs shows a progressively more thorough understanding of the issues and challenges related to child labor and a demonstrably clearer perspective of the IDDG's own role in improving the working conditions of youth workers.

Throughout the period of the program, IDDG members

repeatedly expressed that their participation had given them a new perspective on the issue of child labor and on the effectiveness of the consultative role that it emphasized. Requests from IDDGs for further seminars and training initiatives have been a strong indication of their appreciation of the program.

Lessons Learned

It should be emphasized that the initiating body for this program was an existing national organization. This pre-existing will to act eliminated many of the issues normally associated with program implementation, and as such was an important contributory factor to the long-term success of the program. This same will has manifested itself in the sustainability of the program. Far more has been accomplished after the phasing out of IPEC support, and this is indicative of the commitment to change that exists within the national agencies.

The issues associated with child labor are relevant to many industrial sectors within Turkey and to many SMEs within those sectors. The advantages of applying solutions at local and national levels were clear from the initial program brief and this, combined with the quality of the training delivered, meant that immediate benefits could be observed, adding to the momentum of the program and helping to ensure its continued success.

Many of the more important initiatives within the program relied on inter-agency cooperation at the local and national level. This was encouraged and fostered throughout the program, and the potential difficulties of coordinating with several partners were considered from the project's outset. This, combined with the willingness of the involved agencies to participate cooperatively, was essential to the program's success.

The ease with which this program can be applied in other situations is heavily dependent on the conditions outlined above. If the will to combat child labor issues exists in an environment where the actors are recognized to be part of the industrial and commercial structure, then the lessons derived from this program could be profitably applied.

If applied in other situations the following additional recommendations are made:

- The training package should be broadened to further integrate more supervised fieldwork.
- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms should be in place in greater strength.
- Budgetary planning needs to reflect the above.
- Concrete cooperation at a local government level needs to be established from the onset.
- Training schedules should include an allocation for refresher courses.

UNICEF has already expressed an interest in this program and has proposed cooperation with the IDDGs to provide a child developmental focus to their future work.

TESK has not fully attained its goals, but has the political commitment, strategy and structure in place to continue toward this end.

A lawyer by profession, Dr. Yazman is the Advisor to the President of the Confederation of Turkish Tradesman and Handicrafts (TESK) and the Foundation of Small Industries and Vocational Training (MEKSA) and the President of Credit Guarantee Funds. In 1998 and 1999, he was an advisory member of the government delegation to the ILO Conference and worked on the Committee on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. Dr. Yazman has extensive experience in vocational training, and designing and managing European Union and IPEC projects on child labor. He is the founder of the Work Place Inspection and Consultation Groups (IDDGs) system and has conducted needs analysis and training of the IDDGs.

Nepal: The Rugmark Way of Restoring Childhood

Saroj Rai

Background

The modern carpet industry in Nepal started as a resettlement program for Tibetan refugees in the Kathmandu Valley in the early 1960s. The industry became important when Europe began importing carpets woven in European designs. As exports grew rapidly during the mid-1980s, the industry attracted thousands of rural workers, both children and adults alike.

By the 1990s, the industry was the country's leading exporter. But in 1994 to 1995, it was hard hit by plummeting demand in its only major market, Germany. The use of child labor was seen as the reason behind the slump. Surveys indicated that 12 percent of the workforce were children. Hundreds of children were threatened with being thrown out onto the streets in the "cleaning up" process. The Nepalese carpet industry, government and NGOs felt an urgent need to address the issue.

Nepal Rugmark Foundation (NRF) was established in December 1995 as a member organization of Rugmark International, the parent Rugmark body. Rugmark has unique features:

- Two-dimensional collaboration (the North—South, and industry—NGO);
- An independent inspection and monitoring program;
- Labeling of individual carpets; and
- Long term and meaningful rehabilitation of dis placed children.

Objectives

The major objective is to create a child-labor free environment in the Nepalese carpet industry with a meaningful rehabilitation program. The broader objective is to work for socially and environmentally acceptable business practices, including minimum wages for carpet workers. No time frame has been determined for meeting the objectives.

Process

Nepal Rugmark Foundation commenced licensing the Rugmark label to carpet manufacturers and exporters in November 1996. At that time, children were rescued from the factories of licensees and their suppliers. These children were initially kept in a Transit Home and were gradually transferred to four Rugmark Rehabilitation Centers, established in collaboration with four NGOs. Within a year, all four Centers were operating with about 50 children each. Two NGOs that have their own private schools received older children in higher grades while the other two received younger ones. UNICEF, GTZ (German Agency for Technical Cooperation) and AAFLI (Asian American Free Labor Institute) helped NRF, financially and otherwise.

In mid-1998, the two Centers with private schools were made exclusive to children in grades four and above. The other two continue to receive newly rescued children and conduct non-formal classes for lower grades. The idea is to transfer children from the Centers running non-formal classes to Centers with formal schools as children approach grade four and above.

Both licensing and certification are voluntary. Furthermore, NRF takes a consultative and friendly approach in inspecting carpet factories and rescuing children. A comprehensive database is in place for verification and reporting to the licensees and other Rugmark organizations. In case of non-compliance, licensees and their suppliers are given three chances. A verbal reprimand is followed by a written reprimand, and, as a last chance, a special written commitment.

Verification of the actual age of a child is always a problem. Under pressure from employers or adult family members, children tend not to give their real age. In case of a contra-

diction between the inspector's judgement and what is claimed, children are taken to a medical doctor for an age check. In case of a child actually being over 14, a certificate is issued allowing the child to work. School-going children are not allowed to help their parents in carpet manufacturing.

NRF launched a Community-based Rehabilitation Program in April 1999. NRF carries out detailed feasibility studies, including counseling, to encourage reunions of former working children with their families. NRF signs an agreement with the parents/guardian whereby both parties agree to support the child's education while living with the family. NRF personnel continue visiting the children and families periodically, after the family reunion, for monitoring and support.

Challenges & Achievements

By the end March 2000, NRF had signed License Agreements with 104 exporters and manufacturers, with only one agreement revoked. There are 362 factories involved, about 50 percent of the total carpet factories. At present, some 8 to 10 percent of the total export of carpets are Rugmark labeled.

Since 1997, NRF has rescued 365 child laborers. Of these, 153 are already reunited with their families, and 32 have long-term Rugmark support. NRF will continue supporting the children until they are 18 or complete their education to grade ten. Currently, 203 children live in the four Centers, studying in grades as high as eight. Twenty-nine children are also enrolled in vocational training.

Currently, UNICEF—the major donor—is gradually phasing out and NRF is increasingly using its own funds. NRF's Rehabilitation Program staff monitor the overall program and give technical or other backup support.

Lessons Learned

- Rugmark has already been proven to be a pragmatic and self-sustainable concept.
- Rugmark is instrumental in overall socioeconomic development.
- The major prerequisite for implementation is

that the product is an export item.

- Another precondition is that the producing country is a democratic society.

Some key success factors are:

- A capable and credible implementing organization.
- A supportive, or at least non-interfering, government.
- Financial support (at least for the start-up period) and institutional backing (for credibility) by international organizations.
- Awareness on the part of the employers is a key to success; hence, their trust and cooperation are vital.

The road ahead could be bumpier. NRF must expand its license coverage. At the same time, it has to expand its criteria, making the minimum wage a necessity for certification. Unless a minimum wage is ensured, there is always a possibility that workers' children will become child laborers or will not really go to school. Despite several attempts, NRF has not yet been successful in making the minimum wage a criterion for certification.

A challenge in expanding Rugmark's license base is other similar and competing initiatives. NRF must find ways to increase its level of certification to at least 25 percent of the total carpet exports.

Another immediate challenge for NRF is financial self-sustainability. Currently, NRF's own resources are only enough to cover about 50 percent of total expenses.

Saroj Rai has been with Rugmark since 1998. He worked as a consultant to IPEC before joining Rugmark. He has extensive experience in project management and in the manufacturing sector. He is a chemical engineer and also holds an MBA.

A Closer Look: The Children Who Made Carpets

by Naresh Newar

For the first time, 13-year-old Meena Shrestha has the chance of a normal childhood, not possible when she had to weave night and day at a carpet factory.

Two years ago, her parents sent their 11-year-old daughter to the Potala Carpet Factory in Boudha— an area housing most of the carpet factories in Kathmandu. Her monthly salary of Rs. 500 (US$7) helped to supplement the family income. But all Meena got during her two years working at the factory was free meals and uncomfortable shelter.

"We could not afford to send her to school. I never wanted her to work at the factory, but we had no other choice," says Meena's sick father, who also has to depend on his wife, a daily-wage laborer. They live in an impoverished state in a one-room stuffy apartment in a worn-out building in Maligaun, one of the city's unsanitary slum areas.

Fortunately, Meena is now free from the shackles of exploitative child labor and family poverty. She is among the lucky few in the care of the RUGMARK-EPHC Rehabilitation Center, on the outskirts of Kathmandu. To make her parents proud, Meena, dressed in her school uniform, frequently visits them. Besides formal education, she also receives vocational training, to equip herself with income generation skills that will be useful once she rejoins her family.

However, there are also several children in the Rehabilitation Center who are unsure whether their parents are alive or not. They joined the carpet factories at ages as young as eight, and have had no contact with their families or have lost their home addresses. "One can say that they are abandoned by their parents and relatives," says the RUGMARK Nepal fieldworker.

Gyan Bahadur Shrestha, a native of the Kavre district, barely two hours from Kathmandu, was brought by his uncle to work at Mahakali Carpet Factory when he was only seven years old. He spent six years working there. Now the 13-year-old boy does not know where his mother, who remarried after his father died, is living.

"But there are also children who don't even want to see their parents," says the RUGMARK staff member who travels around to trace parents and reunite children in far-off villages.

Community-based rehabilitation is a significant aspect of the RUGMARK rehabilitation program that, in Sunita Shrestha's case, is clearly a successful one. Sunita's parents sent their daughter to the Potala Carpet Factory when she was just eight. She was rescued after two years. Now 12, Sunita studies in grade five. She was recently reunited with her parents, after staying at one of the RUGMARK Nepal-supported shelters for two years.

However, there are also cases when some parents are not eager for their children to be sheltered and rehabilitated in homes. They want their children to either work at the factories or at home. When a 12-year-old named Som Maya Bal was rescued, her father came to the shelter from his far-off village to take his daughter back. Initially, the Center refused to hand her over, fearing that her father would send her back to the carpet factory. They persuaded him to wait for three months and let her attend non-formal education and acquire some vocational skills. Now, he has returned to claim her. "I'm old and sick, so I need my daughter to help on my farm," he told RUGMARK Nepal staff, who in return asked him to admit his daughter in the village school. "We will come to check," they told him.


Panel C: Providing
Educational Opportunitities

Thailand: Developing the Quality of Life – "Sema Pattana Chivit" – for Girls at Risk of Being Lured into Prostitution

Savitri Suwansathit

Background

The principles behind the Sema Pattana Chivit project are:

- The right to basic education for all, inspired by the World Conference held in 1990 in Thailand (now enshrined in the Constitution), and
- The protection of children's rights, advocated by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Thailand became a signatory in 1992, particularly the rights to education, protection and development.

This project was the first major intervention by the Ministry of Education to combat child labor and child prostitution, targeting girls at risk in specific areas. It was supported by various sectors, including international organizations and NGOs. IPEC, in particular, funded evaluation research in 1998 to review the project strategy and analyze its impact on beneficiaries and families, as well as on communities.

Thailand is surrounded by countries, some of which have experienced difficult circumstances in recent years. Thailand can be roughly divided into six regions:

- Upper North (bordering Burma and Laos, with easy access to China by road);
- Lower North;
- North East (bordering Laos and Cambodia, and accessible to Vietnam and China);

- East and Eastern Seaboard (bordering Cambodia, and accessible by sea to Vietnam, the South China Sea and the Pacific); and
- South (the long peninsula bordering Burma and Malaysia, but easily accessible to Indonesia, Singapore, Australia and the Pacific).

From 1990 to 1994, in the wake of the World Conference on Education for All, Thailand adopted a National Plan of Education for All and launched a nationwide campaign to promote it. During this period, the economy was growing at a sustainable pace, export growth was rapid and the industrial sector increased its GDP share to 15.8 percent, while tourism and the service sector also grew rapidly. Naturally, the growth affected the labor market structure significantly.

In 1994, primary school enrollment was 94 percent, but 6 percent of children between the ages of six and 11 were still outside the education system and risked becoming child laborers or disappearing into the "invisible" non-formal economic sector. Before 1990, transition from primary to secondary school had always been slow, and never exceeded 41 percent. The nationwide campaign brought the rate of transition in Bangkok to 100 percent, and in the South and North East to 75 percent and 78 percent, respectively. The national budget allocation to education also increased about 16 percent per annum.

In 1994, an educational survey showed that 10,000 children in the Upper North—half of them girls—could not be persuaded to continue at secondary level. The reason given was the prepaid commitment by parents to agents that the girls were to "go south" and work in sex-related operations, as their mothers and grandmothers had done.

The Ministry of Education requested an emergency fund for special scholarships for 4,453 girls in 94 districts in the Upper North. Out of this number, 500 were placed in special boarding schools to ensure their safety. The initial scholarship scheme, later known as the Selma Life Development Project (SLDP) was approved, and funding was committed for another two years to allow girls to complete three years of lower secondary education. The SLDP initially targeted child-trafficking in the Upper North, but was later expanded to cover the whole country.

Objectives :

- Stop child trafficking and protect children's educational and development rights.
- Promote positive values of self, education, good citizenship and honest work.
- Provide life skills education and vocational training, to ensure sustained quality of life after schooling.
- Promote income generating activities as part of the curriculum, to help compensate the family and to teach the positive values of work and learning.
- Develop and validate a model educational approach for prevention of trafficking of young girls.

The main strategy was to:

- Provide government scholarships to ensure continuous attendance for three years in lower secondary school.
- Provide special services in boarding schools to girls at extreme risk.
- Develop a separate module of education and reintegrate SLDP girls into mainstream schools.
- Coordinate and monitor 94 SLDP centers, set up with teachers, monks and community leaders.
- Provide counseling and guidance to girls and their mothers.

Process

Implemented in three phases during the past three years, the project was expanded in terms of the number of scholarships provided, to include: children from broken families or with imprisoned parents; children with drug or AIDS problems in the family; AIDS orphans; and those with histories of sex-related employment in the family.

Short-Term Quantitative Achievements :

- Total of 145,000 scholarships awarded from 1994 to present.
- Government budget allocations in seven years total some $10 million.
- First batch of students completed three years of secondary education in 1996.
- Completion rate is now 95.3 percent.
- Continuation to higher secondary plus vocational education is now 75.5 percent.
- Employment rates for those not continuing education is higher than mainstream students.

Lessons Learned

- Moral and political will makes project sustainable.
- Scholarships directly benefit girls who otherwise would become "invisible."
- Project works within the formal education system.
- Targeted girls must be clearly identified and confirmed, and assistance must reach them quickly and effectively.
- Relevance of a curriculum is vital.
- Girls must be prepared for life after school.
- Career opportunities must be expanded and improved.

Challenges

- An economic downturn will affect equal opportunity for education.
- Economic crisis will affect child labor and child prostitution.
- New labor laws and the anti-prostitution law must be vigorously enforced.
- By 2004, when the new National Education Act will be full in force, SLDP will be securely integrated to provide 12 years basic education for all, in the Education Reform Plan of Action.

Savitri Suwansathit is an Inspector-General for the Ministry of Education in Thailand. Prior to this position, she served as Deputy Permanent Secretary of Education, coordinating international cooperation and policy issues. She was also the Secretary-General of the Thailand National Commission for UNESCO from 1996 to 1998. Ms. Suwansathit also served as Secretary-General for the National Commission for Teachers' Civil Service, and for three years was the Deputy Secretary-General for the National Culture Commission. She was the head of the Thai delegation to the all ASEAN COCI meetings from 1990 to 1993 and has attended nearly all UNESCO, UNICEF and SEMEO meetings since 1965.

A Closer Look: Life before Death

by Chitraporn Vanaspong

After a one-hour journey from her boarding school, a pickup truck pulls up at a child care center in Suan Pa village. Meechu (not her real name), 16, jumps off and runs toward a group of children playing in the yard. She quickly spots her four-year-old brother among the other kids.

It has been months since Meechu has been able to visit her family. However, she is quite happy to be away from home, as it is the only way she can further her studies. Meechu is one of the first children in her Akha tribal village to go to secondary school. She is the pride of her family.

In fact, Meechu has every reason to leave school as early as possible. Her father has tuberculosis, leaving her mother as the only breadwinner.

In 1996, a teacher at Baan Pa Kluay School, where Meechu began her primary education, spotted her among the other pupils and helped her apply for a scholarship under the Sema Pattana Chivit Project. The scholarship helped Meechu to further her studies in the Suksa Songkroh Mae Jan School, a boarding school operated by the Ministry of Education.

"I'm happy that Meechu got the scholarship," said her mother. "We don't have enough money to send her to school. I understand how important education is. It will help her get a good job, so she doesn't have to struggle to make ends meet like me."

"I'd never seen a sewing machine in my life," Meechu said with a smile. "The first time I saw one, I knew right away that I would love to learn how to make a dress. Now I can sew, and I know how to fix a sewing machine."

Meechu feels that the project not only allows her to have an opportunity to study, but that the vocational training scheme also widens her alternatives of income generation.

"We have seen many vocational training projects fail before," said Ms. Yenjit Charoenporn, advisory teacher to the school's sewing group. "Usually, the vocational training doesn't work because of insufficient training time and an absence of marketing skills training."

"At our school, we tried to fill those gaps. We made the vocational training program last for three years to ensure that our children will have enough skills to perform the job."

"Also, children learn marketing skills. They have to look for customers by themselves. They go to the neighboring villages, provincial governmental offices and housewives' groups to survey their needs. The school's sewing company ends up getting orders."

Last year, Meechu made approximately 4,000 to 5,000 baht (about $120 to $130) from her sewing work at school. She was able to buy food for her family and clothes for her brother and sister. Apart from that, she paid for medical treatment for her father. She still remembers how her father's eyes filled with tears of pride.

As a stateless Akha, who has no Thai ID card, Meechu can name many unequal opportunities when comparing herself with a Thai citizen. She has no right to vote. She cannot take out a government loan. And she cannot travel independently without prior permission from the provincial office. However, she considers herself lucky compared to some of her friends.

"Some of the girls who participated in this project have already dropped out, during the first or second year of schooling," Meechu said. "They all have the same reason, that their families are so poor, and they need to leave school to make money. I know many of them ended up in inappropriate work. I understand them perfectly. I would do the same if my parents asked me to help."

"From all the skills I learn from school, I am sure that I can earn money from sewing. For my future, I would like to further my studies in Chiangrai's teacher college. I can work to pay for my tuition fee. I hope one day I can become a teacher, and help girls in difficult circumstances as I have been helped."

There have been so many stories of girls in northern Thailand who left their hometowns and who were sold to the sex market. They built their parents a new house, and bought them a new TV and a pickup truck, as well as paying for the education of their young siblings. And when they came home, died of AIDS . . .

Meechu wants to tell her story differently.

Kenya: Capacity Building for School Dropouts

Paschal Wambiya

Background

The Education and Training Project was the result of a 13-country study on education interventions to combat child labor, carried out in 1996 by IPEC and sponsored by the Norwegian government. It was implemented by IPEC-Kenya against the backdrop of existing education interventions.

There was a marked increase in the dropout rates in Kenyan primary schools between 1988 and 1996. While the enrollment rate stood at 95 percent in 1988, it dropped to 79 percent by 1996 as children joined the labor market in various sectors such as the soapstone industry, quarries, commercial agriculture, fishing and domestic labor. In addition, education officials were unaware of the child labor problem.

Objectives

Three action programs were launched between 1996 and 1999:

- The Ministry of Education program;
- The Kisii District Children's Advisory Committee program; and
- The ANPPCAN (African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Child Abuse and Neglect) program.

The overall project aimed to:

- Mobilize education services;
- Train stakeholders, particularly teachers' unions, to institute interventions aimed at creating awareness by sensitizing parents and teachers, communities and society to the rights of the child, especially the right to basic education and protection from economic exploitation; and

- Strengthen formal and transitional education / training systems.

The broad objective was to make education accessible to working children as an alternative to exploitative work.

The main strategies that have been used are prevention, withdrawal, rehabilitation and reintegration. Awareness-raising was also part of the strategy through sensitization of community leaders and administrators, school children and teachers on the dangers of child labor and the importance of education and training as an alternative to child labor.

Process

Ministry of Education Project

The Ministry of Education implemented a program in five schools in five districts of Kenya, starting in 1996. The following primary schools were identified through a needs assessment / baseline survey:

- Tamu Primary school in Kisumu Rural District. The project aimed to help children that were dropping out of school to work in sugar cane plantations. The school grows horticultural crops like tomatoes and onions, which it sells to communities neighboring the school.
- PandPieri Primary School in Kisumu municipality. The project targeted children from slum areas (and others) whose parents had died as a result of AIDS-related ailments and who faced the risk of dropping out. The school project involved raising poultry, horticulture and keeping a tree nursery.
- Bukwamba Primary school in Busia district. The project targeted children engaging in illicit trade across the border between Kenya and Uganda. The school project involved rearing pigs.
- Kamsinga AC Primary school in Bungoma district. The project targeted children working in maize plantations and doing petty trade in Kimilili town. It involved raising sheep and goats. The school also grows maize, beans, and

a variety of vegetables, and has planted coffee trees.

- Mumboha Primary school in Vihiga district. The project targeted children working in domestic service. It involved the rearing of pigs and agriculture.

Kisii Project

The Kisii project aimed to:

- Mobilize the local community and other stake holders;
- Train the volunteer community workers in guidance and counseling;
- Eliminate child labor in the soapstone industry by rehabilitating 100 child workers;
- Strengthen guidance and counseling in designated primary schools;
- Strengthen community committees in order to intensify preventive action against child labor at the grassroots level; and
- Carry out quality participatory action research on sexual exploitation of female child workers.

Baseline surveys on child labor and Participatory Action Research on sexual exploitation of girl-child workers in the soapstone industry were conducted, and reports were produced and disseminated.

ANPPCAN Program

ANPPCAN used popular participation to identify schools, formed child labor committees and started income generating projects for schools to assist child workers with various school levies to enable them to stay in school.

The ANPPCAN program currently supports schools in four districts. Communities which donated land, building materials, labor and security as their contribution to the project have welcomed income-generating activities since 1997. School children have actively participated in the fund-raising projects, which in some cases are directly linked to their

studies. The project's sustainability has been a main concern, and child labor committees, set up in the districts, are expected to fully take over the project after the present consolidation phase. The basis and capacity for replication is strong.

Challenges & Achievements

Ministry of Education Project

The Ministry of Education project directly supported 200 children with books and uniforms. More than 1,000 children benefitted indirectly by having access to the books given to schools and the project activities taking place in the school. Communities that have formed child labor committees in schools have largely sustained these projects, and their role is significant in preventing and monitoring the spread of child labor.

As a result of the formation of child labor committees in schools:

- Child labor awareness-raising is being infused into the school curriculum as a result of the groundwork and sensitization work implemented, since 1996, through the Action Program with the Ministry of Education.
- Primary school enrollment rose to 89 percent in 1999 from 79 percent in 1996.
- Income generating activities in schools helped cover school levies.
- School attendance has improved and disciplinary problems have been eradicated in pilot schools.
- Performance in district and national examinations has improved. Hummwedu primary school in Siaya District, which utilized

money from the income generating projects to buy reference books for targeted children, topped the district in the 1999 Kenya Certificate of Primary Education.

- More classrooms have been constructed, desks provided and hygiene improved.
- Children not in the program have benefitted from additional textbooks and extra classrooms.
- Parents have replicated some of the income generating-activities.
- Children have learned new skills, which they have passed on to their parents, and have enhanced their knowledge of practical skills such as agriculture.

Kisii Project

- A training center was established and provided with staff, renovated premises and equipment. 131 child workers were returned to the formal educational system, 12 child workers were restored to village schools and five self-help groups of parents of child workers were supported in an income-generating scheme.
- Training and advocacy materials were produced and utilized, and a video documentary on child labor was produced. Training on business management was conducted for 16 leaders of four self-help groups.
- A total of 20 community social workers, 15 primary school teachers and 26 peer counselors were trained in counseling skills; the community was sensitized to the dangers of child sexual exploitation and mobilized to combat child abuse.

ANPPCAN Project

- Increased enrollment;
- Improved performance; and
- School equipment updated.

Lessons Learned

Key lessons learned relate to the integrated approach of the intervention.

- Collaboration and networking between different stakeholders and target beneficiaries is vital.
- Ownership by the community is critical.
- Create support systems for the poor and orphaned so that they do not drop out.
- Improve the learning environment by involving children and teachers in activities that bridge the gap between them.
- Community committees are useful in minimizing child labor issues.
- The concept of using people in key positions in the community as "community catalysts" has enhanced the goal of the program.
- Working with existing groups, such as self-help groups, is an effective mode of responding to the perceived basic needs of the community. It is possible to keep children at school if their parents engage in meaningful income generating activities and are sensitized to the importance of education.

In addition, the Ministry of Education has the capacity to replicate the project in more districts, while Kisii's and ANPPCAN's basis for sustainability and replication is very strong. All three projects are firmly rooted in the community and therefore have a very strong chance of being sustainable. However, these programs could be more effective if integrated packages of basic education, life skills and practical skills training were developed that aimed at mainstreaming children into formal education and vocational training institutions. Options need to be considered for children not able to continue formal education so that they do not re-enter the labor market as unskilled workers. Further work and research is necessary to study the options of vocational skills and job creation. There is a need to consider linking up with an initiative for job creation to ensure that children and youth being trained in the skills programs

are also provided with an opportunity to earn income.

No more than 20 primary schools participated in the project activities, out of a total of 17,200 primary schools in the republic. Most of the project activities have succeeded as a result of sacrifices from parents. More resources need to be given to the schools to make the projects sustainable. In addition, the HIV/AIDS problem, which is killing an estimated 500 Kenyans daily, has created a new army of orphans who are being forced into child labor; this poses a threat to gains already made.

Paschal Wambiya is an education specialist with degrees from universities in Kenya, Ghana and England. He has been the Education and Training Project coordinator for IPEC-Kenya since 1999.

India: Bridging the Gap Between Home and School

Shantha Sinha

These children learn the basic alphabet at the camp.

Background

The Ranga Reddy district of Andhra Pradesh in Southern India adjoins the state capital of Hyderabad. It is a semi-arid, highly rural district. Agriculture, the economic mainstay, depends on a sparse and erratic monsoon. There is high unemployment in the district, especially among women. Though the total literacy rate in the area is 49 percent, female literacy is only 36 percent. In some pockets, only 11 percent of women have ever been to school.

It is not uncommon to see whole families in bondage to a landowner. Frequently, children are individually bonded to landowners for small loans taken by their parents.

Although schools exist in most of the villages, there are often no teachers or adequate accommodations. The district has 540,000 school-age children, while there are only 5,272 teachers, averaging up to 100 students per teacher. The poor availability and quality of education ensure that many children drop out at an early age and start work. Work is seen as an obligation of the child to the family, as well as a social and economic necessity and an early training and apprentice program that ensures work.

Objectives

The M. Venkatarangaiah Foundation began a project in the district in the early 1990s which aimed at the total elimination of child and bonded child labor in the target villages and areas. Additionally, the Foundation's aim was that the poor no longer remain passive observers regarding the future of their children, and that they begin to assert their rights.

The strategy relied heavily on motivating parents, easing problems of enrollment, and bridging the gap between

Poultry sheds which serve as classes at the camp.

home and school. The MV Foundation does not view non-formal education as viable either for universalizing education or for eliminating child labor. Its programs revolve entirely around the formal school system.

The Foundation recognized that for a strategy to be successful, it must be replicable. It therefore utilized existing institutions instead of setting up parallel structures. It used funds available under normal government programs, government schools and other institutions. The involvement of government teacher groups has been particularly successful in establishing a Government Teachers' Forum Against Child Labor. The involvement of the local community elders and local body representatives was also a conscious strategy.

The target group consisted of all children from five to 14 years in a village or area, with different approaches for different age groups.

Process

The Foundation set about bridging the physical and psychological gap between home and school through two different, but interrelated, processes.

The Camp-Based Bridge Course

Usually when a child is rehabilitated from work, she/he is admitted to the lowest grade in school. For an older child, this is a traumatic experience, as s/he has to sit with much younger children. The child soon opts to drop out.

At the Camp-based Bridge Course, children are taught reading and writing in a manner and at a pace that ensures that in three to four months they are able to join others of the same age group already in schools. The course increases both children's and parents' confidence in their children's ability to join school and compete on equal terms. For children in the 12 to 14-year age group, there is a special one-year coaching camp to enable them to take the middle school leaving examination of the 7th grade.

The Community-Driven Home to School Process

A larger community-backed Home to School process, encompassing children of all ages in all sectors of work in a village (or area), and deriving support from all sections of the community (including the employer-landlords), was also set in motion.

Systematic extension work was the key factor in this process. In the initial years of work, activists were trained to respond to all the normal queries that a community unfamiliar with universal schooling might ask. Only villages that commit to sending all children to school are considered.

The problems at these schools usually centered on lack of an adequate infrastructure, including manpower. The involvement of the teacher and the local body representative at this stage was crucial. The community also gained a greater understanding of the overall processes related to sending every child to school. The community was required to give commitments for improvements in the infrastructure and for providing more teachers.

Challenges & Achievements

The Camp-Based Bridge Course accomplishments include:

- 85 villages have been made child labor free.
- In more than 400 villages, all children below the age of 11 are in formal schools.
- Nearly 5,000 adolescent girls have accessed schools through the program.
- More than 4,000 bonded laborers have been released.
- Over 8,000 trained youth volunteers contribute to the program today.
- Over 1,600 education activists participate in the program.

- MV Foundation's area of operation has expanded from three villages in 1991 to 500 villages in 1999.
- A forum of 1,000 government teachers has been formed to carry on the campaign.
- 15,000 working children have been sent to main stream school through the Bridge Courses.

In the community-driven Home to School Process communities began to:

- Partially finance the work of motivators and part-time teachers.
- Provide furniture and other items for use in the classroom.
- Provide labor and donations in-kind for construction of additional classrooms.
- Bargain with the government for release of funds for additional infrastructure.
- Challenge the school teachers when their per formance was not satisfactory.

Lessons Learned

The MV Foundation program is applicable:

- Both in rural areas and in urban pockets;
- Where there is formal school infrastructure, however poor or run-down;
- Where there is a strong local organization, preferably an NGO, capable of local action in the community; and
- Where key mangers of the program can closely monitor the process and innovate on the job.

The following conditions are keys to success:

- Existence of an effective community-based organization, preferably an NGO.
- Highly trained and motivated staff.

- Good community-based training capability.
- Good organizational capacity, particularly for the conduct of the camps.

The following are some of the key initiatives for adapting the program in a new area:

- Strike up a strong rapport with the community. The program will succeed only where the implementing agency has the full confidence of the community.
- Demonstrate one successful camp in the area for the idea to catch on.
- Demonstrate in one village that full enrollment of all children is possible through community support.

The MVF model has been replicated in large scale models such as back-to-school programs run by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. It has also inspired similar ventures in other Indian states like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan, and in the city of Calcutta.

Shantha Sinha is the Secretary for the M Venkatarangaiya (MV) Foundation, which was awarded the Rotary India Award in 1999 in recognition of its contributions to eliminate child labor. She is committed to ending child labor through the implementation of universal schooling for children. In recognition of her efforts, Ms. Shantha was awarded the highest civilian award, the Padmasri, by the Indian government in 1998. She also received the Albert Shanker International Award from Education International in 1998 for her contribution to strengthening education for poor children. Shantha Sinha is a professor of Political Science at the University of Hyderabad in India, and she has published articles on the rural labor force, child labor and education.

A Closer Look: Torch-Bearers of Tomorrow

by Geetha Raghuraman

"I want to study. Study as much as I want. Study very fast so that I can become a doctor and treat the sick [for] free."

This is not a pipe dream, but a plausible reality for twelve-year-old Devi. Only two years ago her desire to become a doctor was dismissed as wishful thinking by her parents and had drawn the derisive scorn of her playmates. As she grazed cattle in the parched countryside of rural Andhra Pradesh in Southern India, she hoped that a miracle would happen. She hoped that her father, who had borrowed Rs. 5,000 (US$120) to conduct the marriage of her elder sister, pledging Devi's free labor as surety for the loan, would find enough money to pay back that debt and send her back to the local school.

Today, she is studying hard to be admitted into class eight at the local school.

Devi's story is one of more than 15,000 similar stories thanks to the efforts of the Hyderabad-based M. Venkatarangaiya Foundation, MVF for short. Another hundred thousand non-bonded, but uneducated, children have also entered school through the MVF's bridge course camps.

"We began in a small way and it surprised many of us that these children were so enthused by the prospect of going to school that they would study hard to make up for lost time," said Ms Shantha Sinha, the Secretary-Trustee of MVF. "We realized that most children worked as farm laborers simply because they were not studying, and not the other way around. The parents too were willing to put in extra hours to see their children through school. So we organized bridge courses in a camp atmosphere for the children, who would be trained intensively for a period of time (generally four months) and then admitted in a regular school."

But, the Foundation's euphoria was short-lived. As the first few batches of bonded child laborers began to enter mainstream life, a fresh set of children (never in short supply in a populous country where over 40 percent of the population is below the poverty line) took the place of released children. "It was then that we realized that we had to move beyond tackling bonded labor. We had to talk about the universality of child education and also foster a healthy society to cater to the child's needs. To us, every child out of school is a child laborer," Ms. Sinha added.

Today, the MVF can draw out a list of over a hundred villages where the six to 14 year-old population is 100 percent literate between 6 to 14 years of age, it is "because we have gradually won over the people and made them responsible for the future of the children of the village. But all this has taken time, energy and a lot of patience. We could have read out from the rule book and used force to get the children to school, but there would have been no joy but fear," stated Ms. Sinha.

The total change in societal thinking about education is revealed by the atmosphere at the Girls' Camp at Allur, where bridge courses are conducted by the Foundation to prepare the children to enter regular schools. Classes at the camp are conducted in former poultry sheds. The slightly larger sheds serve as dormitories. But the teachers and children are not bothered about the lack of cemented floors and benches. They sit under the shade of a tree, learning mathematics, science and English. Song, dance, and storytelling are all an integral part of learning as some 300 girls in the nine to 14 age group reside here before they are admitted to the local school and the social welfare hostel run by the state government.

Mr. Rao, the middle-school headmaster in Parveda village, has been a great support to the activities of the Foundation in his teaching career, which spans two decades. "Initially, we teachers posted to the rural areas used to while away the time, as no children would turn up in our schools. We would have parents sauntering in and pulling out their wards when work came by. But now the rush of students is so high. The school I head has 550 [pupils] and the two government-appointed teachers can hardly cope. So we are helped by volunteers supported by the government and the MVF. I have become so involved with the future of these children that now I liaison with the Foundation to find admission [for the children] in the high schools and keep track of their progress."

Dhananjay, a bio-engineering graduate who gave up a lucrative career in New Delhi to

work with the Foundation, said, "We have in these ten years realized ways and means of getting the community involved. This system can be and must be emulated elsewhere in Andhra and the country. It might take a little long initially, but when it becomes a people's movement there will be no stopping it. The target for us is not having sent 0.2 or 0.3 million children to school, but to see the day when all children are educated."

Dominican Republic: Program for the Elimination of Child Labor in Commercial Agriculture

Karen Ovalles

Background

Agriculture is the principal economic activity in the municipality of Constanza, which is an hour from the capital city of Santo Domingo. Production is characterized by the extensive use of chemicals (pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers) on produce such as flowers and vegetables. The municipality produces approximately 75 percent of the vegetables consumed nationally. The use of child labor in agriculture has grown, leading to very serious health problems due to the pesticides. Children drop out of school or never enter the formal educational system.

Objectives

The program for the elimination of child labor in Costanza, funded by United States DOL, aims to:

- Raise awareness and mobilize local organizations;
- Develop concrete initiatives to remove children from work; and
- Develop income compensation projects.

The strategy has education as its fundamental thrust. Other components are legal action, monitoring of children at risk to incorporate them into the program, and social sensitizing and mobilization directed at community groups, families and governmental bodies.

The specific objectives of the project are to:

- Withdraw at least 250 children involved in high risk activities;
- Integrate the children into school;
- Improve the income of 150 families; and
- Make the program replicable.

Process

The program was launched in 1999 and has completed its first phase of mainstreaming children into school. For the purposes of the program, a control group of 374 child agricultural workers, distributed in 17 rural communities of Constanza, was created.

The principal initiatives and activities have been:

- Completion of the assessment study;
- Evaluation of each child's situation regarding family, education, psychology and health;
- Provision of a 3-month educational bridge course, during which children also receive food supplements and medical attention;
- Granting of school assistance, such as uniforms, shoes and school supplies;
- Establishment of the monitoring system, both on the land plots and in the schools, with active community participation through Local Help Committees;
- Establishment of study halls to reinforce learning and study discipline;
- Organization of awareness-raising workshops for teachers, community leaders, associations of parents and friends of the schools, and farmers; and
- Workshops for children, both to listen to them and to strengthen their resistance to child labor.

Challenges & Achievements

To date, 157 children have been removed from commercial agricultural work and incorporated into the formal education system, and a total of 350 children have taken part in three workshops. One hundred and ten teachers, representing all the teaching personnel of the target communities and 64 percent of the whole municipality, have attended workshops.

Workshops have also been held for farmers and farm managers, and for 62 community leaders who provide follow-up and monitor school attendance. The Network for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Labor was formed and has brought together more than 27 community organizations, far more than the ten initially envisaged.

The awareness-raising campaign consists of a weekly radio program, local radio ads, and distribution of program promotional materials. Medical attention received by the children has included complete medical check-ups, treatment of skin and respiratory problems, treatment for parasites, vaccination and medication, as well as friendly conversation and advice on bathroom cleanliness and personal hygiene.

With regard to income compensation, 18 individual loans have been recorded, resulting in three collective projects (a motorbike taxi business, a farm production business and a grocery store) that benefit participating families.

Community leaders and their associations have adopted the theme of child labor in their agendas and provide concrete support for activities.

Families have taken a more responsible attitude, as evidenced by the signing of a written agreement that gives priority to the integration of the children into school. The children themselves, illustrating a change of mentality, talk of technical and professional careers. School retention is around 95 percent and the academic performance of some children places them above others outside the program.

An indispensable initiative was the bridge course, for which education specialists designed a teaching guide. The educational program was divided into four academic areas: practical life, sensory material, mathematics and language.

Another key element was establishing the monitoring system. Monitors report on school absences, health problems, family violence, conduct, student performance, homework and cleanliness. As a follow-up, the local promotion and coordination team visits the family in the event of unjustifiable absences, and seeks help as necessary for problems that arise. Individual attention is given to each child. The same promoter always monitors the same assigned boy or girl. This facilitates follow-up and sometimes develops into

a parental relationship for the boy or girl, establishing an effective compensatory bond in violent or broken families.

Lessons Learned

Changes were made in strategy to adapt to situations and results. More promoters than originally planned were included in the project, which favored monitoring. Those selected were final year education students with proven civic leadership.

The original vision, which included loans to families to compensate for income loss when deprived of the children's earnings, also changed. Experience showed that awareness-raising in the family was more effective and that children's income is easily compensated by greater responsibility toward family expenditures. Furthermore, given the market limitations in the communities and lack of education among the beneficiaries, loan policies were modified. Individual loans were turned into association loans, in which the benefits ensure the acquisition of school uniforms and supplies.

The program encountered an unforeseen obstacle: missing birth certificates required for school enrollment for more than 49 of the 157 children involved. The Educational District made a temporary waiver for this requirement until the situation was resolved.

Activities centered on seven communities, instead of the original 17 planned. This provided better focus. The other communities have been deferred to the second phase of the project.

The three-month bridge course has been a positive experience. It has facilitated adaptation, socialization and preparation for school entry. The model is based on collaboration between local Ministry of Education authorities, the school parents' associations, the Local Network for the Elimination of Child Labor, and local leaders in the communities.

Overall project success was based on:

- The presence of personnel trained in psychology and education who coordinate the project;
- Counselor and teachers within the promotional team;

- The bridge course;
- The teaching guide used in the bridge course;
- The monitoring system;
- The availability of study halls;
- Awareness-raising about the risks of child labor and the commitment of the families to keep their children in school; and
- The involvement of governmental and non governmental organizations.

The model can be easily replicated because the components are simple, flexible, and require minimal resources, and because it is based on joint efforts. It will appeal to areas with medium or extreme poverty, because it fills the gap created by the lack of a formal educational system. At the same time, it grants economically depressed communities a sense of importance and it sows seeds of hope.

Two aspects that should be taken into account when planning similar programs are:

- The selection of high profile psychology counselors from outside the participating community.
- A proportional number of boys and girls within the promotional team, where each promoter takes care of less than 50 children from the point of recruitment to the start of school and beyond. This guarantees a continuous relationship and greater trust between the children and the promoters.

It is evident that two years of monitoring do not ensure the future learning of the beneficiary children, who barely attended the first two or three years of their basic school. The number of children involved in high risk agricultural work is double the number of those recruited to date. The project should be integrated into national Education, Labor and public health policies as a priority.

The assessment study should provide the design for more coherent educational programs for older children and the improvement of teaching methods.

At present, a strategic plan for the prevention and elimination of child labor is in the works. A resolution was signed by all the members of the Network to reach the entire school age population and to make Constanza a region free from child labor.

Karen Ovalles is a clinical psychologist with degrees in family therapy and integral health for teenagers. She has worked for Provojen for five years, and is currently the coordinator of the United States DOL-funded program in Constanza. Prior to this, she coordinated a program focusing on mental health, pregnancy prevention and HIV/AIDS in teenagers.

A Closer Look: Sandy Goes to School

by Ruth Herrera

In Constanza, a child farm worker's dreams turn to the future when he trades his hoe for a pencil.

Sandy can't see his hands in the darkness of his shack, made from palm bark and zinc, but he feels them because of the pain from abrasions on his left thumb caused by the knife he uses to trim garlic plants. Far away, roosters herald the dawn. He has to hurry to get a place in the landowner's truck. In Constanza, the land belongs to others and is concentrated in a few powerful hands. He jumps from the worn mattress that he shares with three other brothers. He doesn't have breakfast—there's none; nor does he wear working boots—he has none.

He manages to climb into the back of the truck before other journeymen—adults and other children without a childhood like himself. In the cold and fog, the icy wind cuts his unprotected face. Sandy doesn't look beyond his hands and forgets his discomfort. They are his most valuable working asset. They pick potatoes, extract onions, dig up lettuce, behead beets and cut and gather garlic bulbs. He knows that he can bring home between 80 and 120 pesos ($5 to $7) a day to contribute to the very limited family income and to buy a pair of shoes for everyday wear. Each morning, from dawn to mid-afternoon, even when the temperature drops, rain or hail falls, or the sun burns, he bends his weak body over the furrows that feed the cities in the valley.

Going to school is not one of Sandy's habits. Once, some years ago, when they lived deep in the mountain, he would take a long and steep road to go to class. "But, we were so far away that he never learned anything," says Viola Delgado, his mother, who, some 40 years old and with eight children, tanned by the sun and the hard days, is illiterate just like her husband. "How could he learn if with the sweating of the trek he forgot what he was taught in school?"

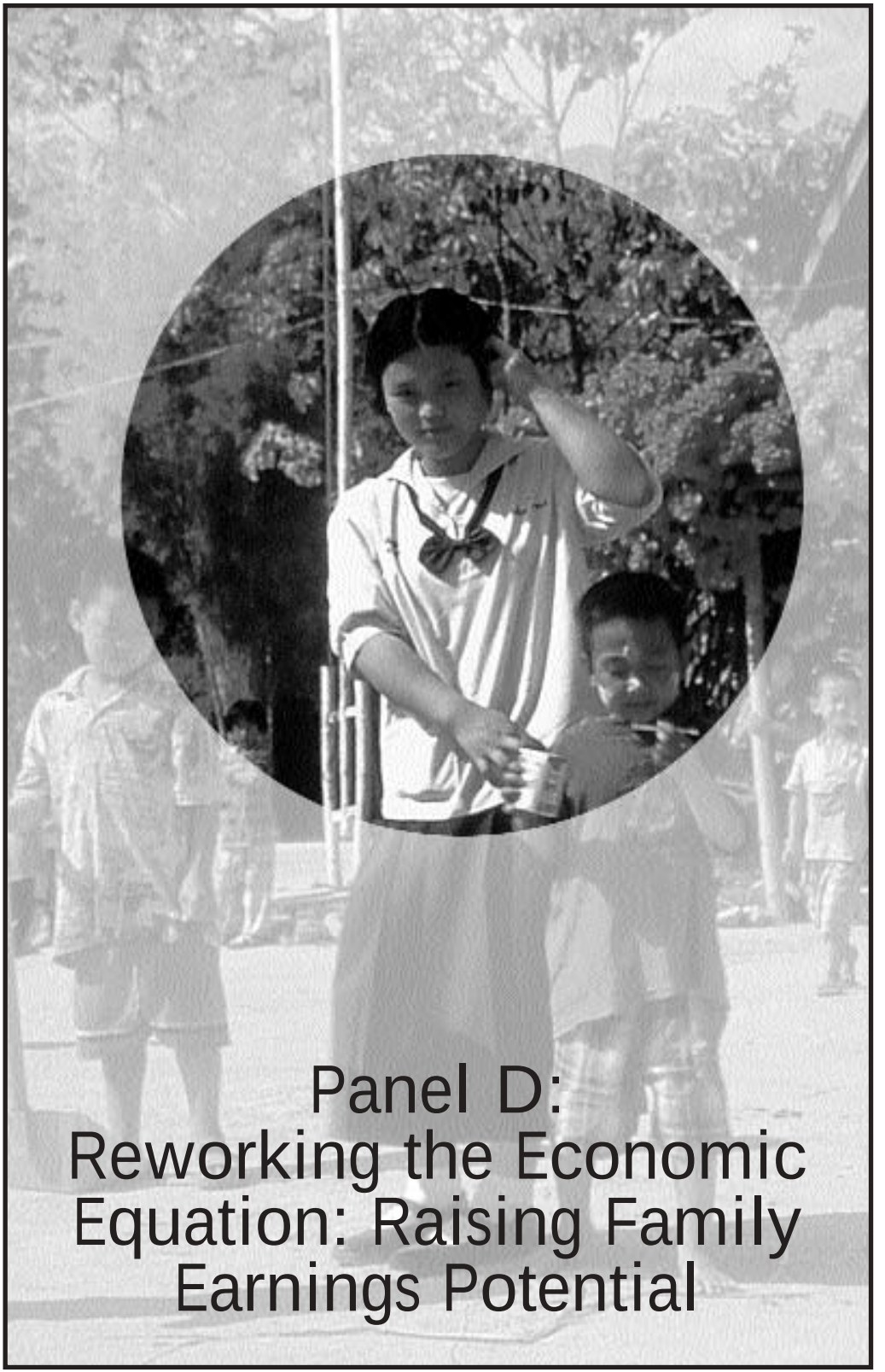
In her hut with its dirt floor, only a thin sheet separates the cramped "living room" from the sleeping cot. A wooden table and wobbly chairs make up the furnishings. There's no electricity or running water, nor a nearby faucet, sanitation nor even a latrine. It is the same in all the others huts in El Chorro.

As soon as they reach a certain height and age, the children go with their parents to the plantations. There they become a fragile labor force exposed to the excessive herbicides and pesticides applied to the fields. Barefoot often and underfed daily, they drink bottled refreshment to sustain them during the work day, and their health is assaulted by intestinal parasites, skin bacteria, stomach disorders and incessant runny noses.

"Yes, I like to study and I want to continue to help my family," affirms Sandy. His mother Viola adds, "It's more advantageous for me if they go to school, even if they don't earn anything, for they don't make much with a day's work anyway. My husband and I are poor and don't know anything about reading; if the children turn out as dumb as we are, we'll never be happy. It's better if they study."

Nieves Abreu, one of the ladies from Constanza hired to recruit children into the project and to promote their regular class attendance, offers this testimony, "When we started, the children didn't even recognize the letter 'O,' nor did they know how to greet people. The way they smelled prevented others from getting too close—they seldom bathed or combed their hair. They have improved a lot."

Both the children's appearance and their concentration have improved. The neatness of their notebooks speaks a language different from ignorance. They have recovered their right to be children and to dream of a life beyond the land owned by others and their dire family needs. Besides, as José Pichardo, a diligent community leader in El Chorro, says, "the children have put aside the mentality of handling a few pennies, of thinking of the day they don't have them when they will have to go find them anywhere, now they are only interested in their school."



Panel D: Reworking the Economic Equation: Raising Family Earnings Potential

Guadalupe Gomez, her son Pablo and her two daughters hammer stone near the Samala river bank.

Guatemala: Child Labor in the Stone Quarries of Retalhuleu

Maribel Rodríguez

Background

Retalhuleu, about 120 miles from Guatemala City, has a population of 225,985. Retalhuleu has a school drop out rate of 10 percent; an average of 30 children per teacher; a literacy rate of 33 percent. About 189 families are involved in crushing rock in quarries on the banks of the Samalá River. Each rock weighs up to 100 pounds and requires five days to reduce to gravel. The gravel is sold by the cubic meter to the construction industry. More than 500 children between the ages of five and 15 work long hours alongside their parents, producing about one cubic foot of gravel every two to three days. The sale of the children's work brings in between $5 to $10 per cubic meter, depending on demand. The children and their parents suffer from respiratory and other ailments as a result of the dust, heat, physical exertion and injuries.

Objectives

The program was launched in 1998, for a duration of 19 months, to:

- Progressively withdraw children from work by offering improved technology for rock crushing and providing educational alternatives;
- Incorporate child labor into the Ministry of Labor's social development agenda and support activities of other social agents in the implementation of policies; and
- Create awareness among the population on child labor as exploitation.

The implementing agency is Habitat, an NGO specializing in sustainable development and the environment, supported by IPEC.

Process

A preliminary survey was carried out with the beneficiaries, local authorities, implementing agencies and local development organizations. A study involving 40 children was also conducted to understand their situation. This participatory process resulted in an integrated plan of action that included the following components:

1. Health
2. Education
3. Provision of economic alternatives
4. Communications and community participation
5. Research and documentation.

Activities have been participatory and community-based. They have involved the creation of a community development organization in each of the 13 communities where the families live, a consultative committee of teachers and another of social workers, three community pharmacies and one medical clinic. The project also organized the gravel-making workers into an association, and a cooperative involving ten families was formed. The project financed the creation of brochures, a video and street theater production, and other non-written communications to publicize the project.

Workshops and seminars were conducted for the families, community leaders and officials in all of the areas of intervention:

- 700 teachers and principals participated in "Teaching with Tenderness" and skill-enhancing workshops;
- 300 children attended and participated in a street theater production designed to encourage them not to drop out of school;
- 54 families participated in a nutrition workshop;
- 100 families participated in the microenterprise training programs; and
- Three community members were trained to become basic health educators and work in the community pharmacies.

The action program received the support of the Guatemalan Departments of Health, Education and Labor as well as local and departmental authorities, which continue to provide support to the communities.

Challenges & Achievements

The project achieved the following results:

- 121 children withdrawn from the quarries;
- 240 children attending school;
- 30 families in alternative work;
- 10 families formed a cooperative and bought equipment to crush the rocks;
- 48 adults took part in literacy classes;
- 700 teachers and principals participated in work shops and training programs; and
- 247 people received medical attention.

Lessons Learned

The program highlights the importance of involving the community in the project's design and the success that can be achieved by using an integrated process.

The biggest challenge was getting the families to change their view of the world (from one of resignation and acceptance of their poverty) to believe that change and improvement in their living condition was possible and that they were agents in their own destiny. The project had to overcome the skepticism of the target population. The health fairs (days of free medical attention) were a key to gaining public confidence.

Maribel Rodríguez graduated from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland, and has a Masters in Social Sciences. She coordinated fieldwork for sociological research on child labor in Retalhuleu. She has also acted as a consultant for the Canadian Centre for Research and International Cooperation, training professional and technical staff on field data collection and reporting.

A Closer Look: Boys at the Beach

by Carlos Bendfeldt

At sunset, Mario stares out of the window of his house, which consists of an almost empty room with a bed, a small gas oven, a table, and a poster of the Virgin Mary and last year's calendar on the wall. As the sun goes down it seems to shatter into pieces against the horizon, reminding him of the rocks he used to smash into pebbles with a hammer held in his small hands, at a place the locals call the "beach."

The 12-year-old has no idea how the place got such a peculiar name, as there are no bathers and one can barely walk there. It's a desolate river shore, a valley of rocks beside the Samalá river, with huge piles of granite rocks. It looks more like Mars than Earth. The only people who go there are forced to by economic necessity.

With his parents, three of his siblings, and his uncles and cousins, Mario spent five years of his life with a hammer in his hand. He learned to hold it before pencil or pen, for longer than any of his few toys.

It takes him around 20 minutes to reduce a rock, the size of both his hands extended, into gravel the size the construction contractors require. "But my father can do it in five," he explains.

Despite his long experience with the hammer, he often hit himself on the hand while holding the rock steady. First he felt aching pain, then his hand turned heavy, warm and numb; then he felt weak palpitations. "It was as if you were holding your heart in your hand," he says.

Mario admits he didn't like working there, but he knew had to. "Otherwise we'll have nothing to eat," his parents always told him.

And they were right. The family worked hard and the days felt long under an improvised shelter they built to protect them from the blazing sun. The dry heat could reach 85 degrees in the shade. Often his parents had to take any price for the pebbles they sold. They were the equivalent of the smallest fish in the food chain, because the handmade pebbles that families produce are only worth two thirds of those made by the five factories nearby that produce standardized and smaller rocks.

The six-months rainy season was the worst part of it all. The construction companies halve the normal price, and demand covers only a few families. This meant that every year Mario's parents would have to ask for credit at the supply stores in order to get a small amount of beans, and corn for tortillas. Within a few days, most families at his village, San Antonio, were living on credit, and the supply store owners would only sell to those who had money. "Those were times in which we would eat one day and spend two without any food."

But, as he switches on the light bulb that was installed in his house a month ago, he explains that all those sad thoughts seem distant to him. Today his mother prepared his favorite dish for lunch: chicken soup. And he noticed an expression of happiness when he asked for a second bowl.

In three months, a series of small details show the radical difference in his life. He no longer wears shoes with holes in them, and he's specially careful not to get muddy when he wears his favorite clothing, blue jeans that his mother bought for him two months ago on his birthday. In the mornings he no longer walks with the boys to the beach - he leads his younger brother, Antonio (10), and his two little sisters, Maria and Concepción (ages five and 7) to the school they all attend.

During recess time they eat atole and tortillas with beans. He likes his teacher, Mr. García, a young man who's taller than his father and seems to get mad when he and his classmates chat too much. But when they behave, he responds gladly to any question: "How do mountains form, what's the sun made out of, where's San Antonio located on the map . . . ?"

What Mario likes most about school is soccer. Although he's not very good, his new pals have already accepted him as a defender.

All these things were introduced in Mario's life when his father, Vicente, obtained financing in order to buy a chainsaw and dedicate himself to wood cutting. "I wanted to believe that there was a way for me and my family to abandon stone smashing," he explains, and the wrinkles in his face, caused by years of work under the sun, grow deeper. Now he can pro-

duce more logs than the people who cut

trees by hand, and he makes a profit that enables him not to depend on his children's work and also pay off the loan.

Additionally, his wife can stay at home, taking care of his two youngest sons who will be able to attend school when they grow up, just like Mario and their other siblings. These young children will grow up not knowing what a hard day of hammering feels like.

When Mario grows up, he says, he would like to be an auto mechanic, "So I don't have to go back to the beach."

Peru: Elimination of Child Labor in the Huachipa Brick Sector

Rochelle Beck

Background

El "arrumado" is the piling of bricks. Beginning at the age of 5, children help to position the bricks in rows to make it easy for trucks to pick them up.

Child labor is utilized in making bricks in almost all Latin American countries. While there are laws limiting child labor in general (in most countries, the legal age for employment is l4; in Paraguay and Peru, it is 12), due to the extreme poverty and the relative isolation of the areas of production, even these minimum laws are not enforced.

It is estimated that in the entire area of Huachipa, near Lima, some 1,000 families are engaged in the manual production of bricks, including about 3,000 children and teenagers. There are 200 brick-making families in the project's area of influence in the communities of Paraiso and Nieveria, accounting for a total of approximately 800 children.

In Huachipa, approximately 70 percent of houses are without water, less than 6 percent have sewage facilities and only 45 percent enjoy the benefit of electricity. Most inhabitants have not completed primary school and 15 percent are illiterate. Health and educational services are far away and difficult to access. There are only primary schools in the town and the infrastructure leaves much to be desired.

Until the 1980s, the only economic activity was agriculture. The manual production of bricks was introduced at the beginning of the nineties; it was a low-cost investment and labor—mainly farming families migrating from the Central Highlands—was readily available.

Several players are involved in the brick production and marketing process: the parcel owner; the contractor, who rents the land and hires workers to produce the raw bricks; the worker, who, with the help of his family, produces the raw bricks and earns his pay from the contractor; and the

kiln owner, who buys the raw bricks from the contractor at the yard and transports them to his premises, fires them and sells them as a finished product.

The worker's production process consists of four main stages. In each of them he must move approximately 3.5 tons of clay to be able to produce 1,000 raw bricks. The physical effort requires parents to involve their children. Work normally starts at 4 a.m. and ends at about 6 or 7 p.m. Boys and girls participate in almost the entire process from the age of six, in some cases at an even earlier age. Children work about four to six hours per day. A worker and his family must produce 1,000 bricks in approximately two days in order to earn about US$9. This is the equivalent to average family earnings of US$140 per month.

Objectives

- To provide educational alternatives and diet and health improvement, with an additional component consisting of micro loans for specific economic activities, with the aim of completely eliminating child labor in the area.
- To provide a new business model to make child labor unnecessary.

Process

Phase I

In July l997, IPEC, with the Peruvian NGO ADEVI (Asociacion para la Defensa de la Vida), began the initial stage of the project, which involved several activities:

- Sensitizing the communities, both children and adults, on the negative aspects of child labor.
- Raising the issue with policymakers at local, regional and national levels to involve them in these communities.
- Establishing a system of micro credits to residents of Paraiso and Nieveria.

Phase II

Beginning in l998, the second phase of the project included partnership with the Peruvian NGO, AIDECA (Ibero-

American Association for Development of Marketing and Handicrafts), which has experience in the field of development, focusing on social and technological issues and forging strong public – private alliances. The plan was to totally revamp the economic model for the families, the communities, and the brick making industry itself in order to make child labor unnecessary. The new model has several components:

- Economic: increase each beneficiary family's income sufficiently so that their children can go to school and / or play.
- Organizational: develop strong community organizations, reinforce their governance skills, and introduce beneficiary ownership of a new brick factory.
- Technological: use innovative and appropriate technologies to create new kilns and production methods to increase productivity.
- Educational: help parents understand the developmental needs of their children (nutrition, health care, interaction with their peers and parents); motivate children to stay in school; and inform policymakers about these children's and families' needs.
- Sustainability: market production aggressively to generate not only stable employment but also net profits.

Several parallel steps were undertaken to change the social and economic patterns in these two communities:

- AIDECA developed a plan for a new kind of kiln and production system that would combine high efficiency with ease of machinery operation, low maintenance costs and low energy consumption.
- A new community NGO was established in Nieveria and Paraiso, managed by the beneficiaries, for community governance and management of the brick factory.
- In l999, the community NGO and AIDECA

developed a "Social Development Brick Factory," a legally incorporated profit-making business for all aspects of brick manufacture and sale. Beneficiaries will no longer be day laborers, but employees (with salaries and benefits). They will also be shareholders, participating in all decisions and benefitting directly from its success. Their jobs will be permanent, and controlled by themselves. In order to be a beneficiary, families have to agree to not allow their children to work. They also agreed that 50 percent of the corporation's profits would be reinvested in the new Brick Factory itself, and 50 percent would go to social and educational projects.

- AIDECA negotiated strategic alliances in Lima. Agreements have been signed with the major building contractors to buy the full production of the new brickworks and to continue to market them.

- Beneficiaries agreed to enter into a "civil partnership" with AIDECA to own and manage the new brickworks. During the first year of this partnership, 95 percent of the shares were owned by AIDECA, and 5 percent by the community NGO. During this first year, AIDECA established programs in governance and decision-making to raise beneficiaries' capacity to run the corporation as well as the brickworks. AIDECA plans to increase classes in business management, marketing and other skills. If all goes according to plan, additional stock will be transferred from AIDECA to the community NGO. By the end of the third year, AIDECA will legally cede 95 percent of its share to the community NGO. Its remaining 5 percent will allow it to stay involved.

Challenges & Achievements

Direct Achievements:

- Today, 300 children between ages five and 14 have been removed from the work force in

Paraiso and Nieveria.

- 100 families of beneficiaries are members of the new community NGO and participate in all its decisions.
- 350 meals daily are provided through the new school nutrition programs in the two communities.
- Seven separate child health campaigns have come to Paraiso and Nieveria, diagnosing, treating and vaccinating children against infectious childhood diseases.
- There has been a total shift in the politics of the community with respect to child labor, to a total desire to eliminate it.

Indirect Achievements:

- More members of the communities want to be part of the beneficiary group, and there is more acceptance of eliminating child labor in general.
- Improved health and community service programs are available to all.
- Neighboring land owners and farmers have asked for AIDECA's help.
- A new public library has been built in Nieveria.

As part of an integrated effort with IPEC and AIDECA, other institutions are now working in the area to ensure elimination of child labor. A consortium of Spanish NGOs and a Peruvian NGO are working in a Spanish-funded project to improve the provision of social services in the area. They have underwritten the operation of a Health Center and a Community Services Center.

A coordinated effort including AIDECA, ADEVI and the INABIF Street Educators Program is continuing its field-work directly with the families and monitoring school attendance, child development problems, and the incidence of child labor.

El "canteo" is the placing of bricks on the edge. Alicia is turning bricks on their side, so that they dry evenly in the sun.

The Ministry of Health has recently approved the community's Health Center as a formal part of its public health network.

The Community Services Center, which now offers tutoring, help with homework, classes in English and computers, will become a formal part of INABIF's program.

INABIF has confirmed its ongoing commitment to having its Street Educators remain in the communities to help with problems, monitor truancy and report any recurrence of child labor.

Strategic agreements have been secured with the National Construction Training and Research Service (SENCICO), the official body that provides the certificate of guarantee for all bricks produced in the country. Support has also been secured from the Peruvian Construction Chamber (CAPECO), the body representing the major construction companies in the country, to provide the commercial structure to channel the marketing and sale of the new company's bricks, thus guaranteeing sales.

In addition to the increased income generated by the new brickworks model, other businesses have begun or are planned.

Lessons Learned

- The model must be community-driven.
- NGOs have a major role to play.
- New technologies must be appropriate to the community.
- Real increases in family income are essential.
- Moral persuasion or legal threats are not enough to change behaviors relating to child labor. They need to be tied to economic gains.

Civil decision-making best practices are an important component. Basic democratic governance issues are not commonplace in these communities. Trust, transparency, due process, majority rule, and so on need to be taught, practiced, and integrated into the new economic models established.

Making the community legal shareholders in the economic enterprise increases their self-esteem, their sense of civic and economic responsibility to the success of the project, and their commitment to ending child labor. Making the transition a gradual one builds in technical assistance and monitoring in a non-intrusive manner.

Strategic public-private partnerships are essential. This is true with regard to the private, economic side of the model (the marketing and sale of the bricks), as well as to the public, social side of the project (the permanent provision of education, health and social services in these communities).

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Nepal: Toward the Elimination of Bonded Child Labor

Uddhav Raj Poudyal

Background

A system of agricultural bonded labor, called Kamaiya, is prevalent in western Nepal. A survey has detected 15,152 Kamaiya households, indebted to landlords, comprising 83,375 persons. Some 46 percent of Kamaiya families are homeless and live on the landlord's premises. It is estimated that there are about 13,000 children working under the Kamaiya system.

Large numbers of children are also found throughout the country in debt bondage in the service sector, particularly in hotels and restaurants, as well as in commercial activities such as brick making, stone quarries and carpet factories. In some instances, children from rural areas are assigned to work in urban households or manufacturing units. The estimated total number of bonded children in Nepal is 33,000.

- Objectives Increase the capacity of government, employers, workers, and NGOs to prevent and combat child labor.
- Prevent and withdraw children from bonded labor conditions and provide them and their families with alternatives.
- Strengthen the capacity of the government to develop national policies and strategies to deal with the Kamaiya problem, and provide a mechanism to coordinate with NGOs.

Since the inception of a two-year IPEC program in 1998, efforts have been made to forge a broad alliance of government, employers, workers and NGOs. The approaches being adopted are legislative reforms and enforcement mechanisms, policy development, direct support to children and families (especially by providing education, train-

ing and alternative economic opportunities), awareness-raising activities and unionization of bonded labor.

The project targets 3,200 children in the 6 to 14 age group working in hotels and restaurants, carpet factories, brick kilns, and stone quarries; 300 families working in agriculture under the Kamaiya system; and 40 communities to be sensitized and involved in vigilance groups.

At the end of the project, the following is planned to ahcieve:

- 3,200 children freed from bondage;
- 2,400 working children in the 9-14 age group provided with Non-Formal Education;
- 300 children in the 13 to 14 age group supported for vocational education; and
- 300 families provided with economic alternatives through microfinancing.

The project provides:

- Direct support
- Institutional development
- Capacity building
- Awareness-raising
- Research and Project development
- Policy and legal support

Implementing agencies are: The Department of Land Reforms; the Nepalese Trade Union Congress; the General Federation of Trade Unions; the Informal Service Center, an NGO; Rural Reconstitution Nepal, an NGO; and the Child Development Society, an NGO.

The trade unions engaged in the unionization of agricultural workers will form agriculture workers' organizations. These workers will be educated on workers' rights, child rights, the effects of child labor and gender equality.

Process

The critical initiatives are mainstreaming working children

into formal school, providing their families with an economic alternative through micro-financing, and improving working conditions by unionizing workers.

After the identification of the bonded child laborers and their families, a sensitization program is launched in the villages for awareness-raising and building self-confidence. Once the families decide to remove their children from bondage, the project enrolls the child in formal school and trains the parents on group dynamics. The parents are asked to form a credit/savings group comprised of 15 to 25 members, depending upon the situation of the village. The financing is made through rural micro-credit with a revolving fund of Rs. 5,000. The group members are encouraged to start their own savings through village saving and a micro credit scheme. They are also provided with training on bookkeeping, accounting and small enterprise management. The groups themselves analyze and identify potential areas for capital investment based on their own knowledge and context. To date, the income generating activities have been based on agriculture and off-farm enterprises. They include livestock raising, establishing off-season vegetable production, and establishing small grocery stores, and small enterprises such as bicycle repair, tailoring, production and sale of traditional handicrafts.

The credit is disbursed by group decision and the group members take responsibility in both investment and repayment. The criteria for disbursing loans are developed by the group. For example, the post-vocational trainee has priority for getting a loan. Credit assistance is provided to the Kamaiya families whose children or members work under bondage conditions and are willing to be freed. The families selected for receiving loans are required to send their children to formal school. The loan repayment rate is very encouraging (90 percent) and timely. At present, about 1,200 children of bonded laborers are continuing their education.

Many families of bonded laborers have started income generation activities and formed credit saving groups. A broad-based alliance of 17 organizations, called the Kamaiya Concern Group (KCG), has been formed.

Due to an advocacy campaign, the government has accepted the need for new legislation. Many families of bonded

laborers are negotiating annual wages with the employers. Employers are also being sensitized on the issue and are changing their attitude to wages. Change is observed through indicators such as the enrollment rate.

Challenges & Achievements

While some bonded laborers have benefitted from the government's land distribution program, no comprehensive scheme for the elimination of the practice, provision of easy credit and the rehabilitation of the bonded labor is in existence. As the bonded laborer and family are under the control of the landlord, it is not possible for them to attend any training program or participate in any income generating activities without the consent of the landlord. Under these circumstances, if the programs are to be successful, they must have a strong component of advocacy on human rights and child rights. It is necessary not only to sensitize employers and the community at large on basic issues of human rights, but also to help the bonded laborers themselves to understand their legal rights and improve their self-esteem. Action Programs should also address the entire issues of bondage of the family. Limiting the scope to the emancipation of the children only will not be fruitful.

Lessons Learned

- Mainstream working children into formal school and provide families economic alternatives and the possibility of unionizing for better working conditions;
- Promote understanding of the problem by the families, communities and local government;
- Expand the capacity of trade unions to unionize workers involved in informal sectors;
- Increase employer awareness and commitment to improve the situation; and
- Create a collaborative and coordinated approach among partners.

The practical lessons learned from the project are that if opportunities of alternative income generation are provided for families of bonded laborers, they can build their self-esteem and will not push their children into the worst forms of work. Members of the micro-credit group have sent their children to school and have not pushed them into hazardous work; thus the project has contributed to the elimination of child (bonded) labor among Kamaiya families through the alternative income component. This has become a best practice, encouraging parents socially and economically to keep their children away from hazardous work conditions and to provide them with basic education.

Communities are demanding long-term solutions, especially in terms of access to land and housing and economic opportunity.

The project is replicable for the immediate elimination of the worst forms of child labor, especially in the informal sector, and could also be useful for designing activities that provide alternatives to child labor in child labor prone communities. Implementing agencies must determine the attitude of a community toward education. In addition, they must determine labor standards on child labor and analyze government policy.

Uddhav Raj Poudyal has been working in the field of Nepalese development for the past eight years. As an IPEC program manager, planner and coordinator, he focused on education, children's rights and children's health. A trained pharmacist, Mr. Poudyal has used his training to bring a medical focus to child labor, especially regarding the impact of medicine on children working under extreme conditions. He has worked with humanitarian agencies such as IPEC and SCF-UK to identify, develop, implement and evaluate various programs and program strategies and research projects on this issue. He has written a number of articles, including two on child labor, titled "Child to Child: In Relation to Quality Education" and "Children's Potentialities and Participation."

A Closer Look: Freedom at Last

by Naresh Newar

Bardiya, a remote district in the mid-western lowlands of Nepal, is beset with extreme poverty. Here, the Tharus, a migratory ethnic group from various districts of West Nepal, live with a more harsh reality: slavery, still practiced in modern Nepal.

Living on the brink of poverty, a large group of the Tharu community were pushed into the kamaiya system and bound as virtual slaves to landlords for generations until the debt is paid off. Husband, wife and children all serve the master in the farm and household with only two square meals a day and a meager share of the grain harvest as their reward. The children fare the worst: exploitation, no schooling and neglected health.

Weary-looking and stunted, nine-year-old Durga Chaudhary doesn't like to talk about her family. Her parents have to bear the consequences of debts owed by her great-grandfather to the landlord. Fortunately, she is no longer a kamaiya.

Durga lives in Kalika Village Development Committee (VDC)— which is dotted with the make-shift thatched huts that house over 50 kamaiya families. She is among the 50 bonded child laborers liberated and rehabilitated. She now spends her time in a non-formal education (NFE) class and, on completion of this six-month program, will join a nearby government school.

In this village, the sounds of kamaiya children reciting their alphabet ring with hope. Although half of the 30 children in the classroom are still engaged as kamaiyas, their masters (zamindars) spare them three hours every morning to attend the NFE class. Sensitization and awareness campaigns have changed the attitudes of several zamindars. In some VDCs, they have donated plots of land to build schools. In Dhorhara VDC— a 45-minute-drive from Kalika— zamindar Mahendra Raj Sharma donated his land to construct a two-room school where a majority of kamaiya children study. "At least 75 percent of the kamaiya children attend this school," says Sharma, sounding proud of his contribution.

Another reformed zamindar, Luharay Thakur— also a vice-president of Dhorhara VDC— is working with politicians to eliminate kamaiya children's slave-like treatment in many households. "This exploitation must be an important agenda on all district level committees. Only then can we make the kamaiya issue a national one," explains Thakur, the head of a 40-member household who has freed all kamaiyas working for him.

Sensitizing zamindars seems like a practical approach to dealing with the problem. One zamindar, Tara Gyawali, cycled all the way to the school to look for his two 14 and 16 year-old kamaiyas, Mangala Devi and Sumitra Chaudhary, who sneaked out of their master's house to attend the NFE class. Their father— although keen on his daughters' education— rushed in to warn of their furious master searching for them. Just as the zamindar was about to enter the class, the female teacher intervened until the zamindar finally agreed to let his "slaves" complete at least one NFE session.

Suryapatuwa VDC, a bumpy hour's ride from Kalika, is a small village with clusters of cosy-looking huts built by the kamaiyas. The compound, in what was once a dense forest, is the meeting point for the Tharu women's saving group, who sit under the shady trees discussing ways to promote activities of the "Child Development Center."

"We are no longer kamaiyas," says Maghi Chaudhary, 35, who relaxes in her mini grocery outlet set up with a micro-credit loan. With the income from the shop, she and her husband managed to clear the family debt of Rs. 4500 (US $68), and repay the micro-credit loan in weekly installments during the first year. Maghi's family also built their own small cottage on the 0.12 hectares of land provided by the Department of Land Reforms. Their three children now attend vocational training in carpentry, sewing and bicycle repair.

About Us

International Child Labor Program
U.S. Department of Labor

The International Child Labor Program (ICLP) is part of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of International Labor Affairs (ILAB). ICLP was created in 1993 in response to a direct request from Congress to investigate and report on child labor around the world.
As domestic and international concern about child labor has grown, ICLP's programs and activities have significantly expanded. Today, these activities include continued research and reporting on international child labor, administering grants to organizations engaged in efforts to eliminate child labor, and working to raise public awareness and understanding of the child labor issue.

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List of ICLP publications:

By the Sweat & Toil of Children: Volume VI (2000)
An Economic Consideration of Child Labor

By the Sweat & Toil of Children: Volume V (1998)
Efforts to Eliminate Child Labor

By the Sweat & Toil of Children: Volume IV(1997)
Consumer Labels and Child Labor

The Apparel Industry and Codes of Conduct (1996): A Solution to the International Child Labor Problem?

Forced Labor: The Prostitution of Children (1996) Symposium Proceedings

By the Sweat & Toil of Children: Volume II (1995) The Use of Child Labor in U.S. Agricultural Imports & Forced and Bonded Child Labor

By the Sweat & Toil of Children: Volume I (1994) The Use of Child Labor in U.S. Manufactured and Mined Imports

International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor, International Labor Organization

The International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor's (IPEC) aim is to work towards the progressive elimination of child labor by strengthening national capacities to address child labor problems, and by creating a worldwide movement to combat it.

IPEC's priority target groups are bonded child laborers, children in hazardous working conditions and occupations and children who are particularly vulnerable, i.e. very young working children (below 12 years of age), and working girls.

The political will and commitment of individual governments to address child labor in cooperation with employers' and workers' organizations, other NGOs and relevant parties in society – such as universities and the media – is the starting point for all IPEC action. Sustainability is built in from the start through an emphasis on in-country "ownership". Support is given to partner organizations to develop and implement measures which aim at preventing child labor, withdrawing children from hazardous work and providing alternatives, and improving the working conditions as a transitional measure towards the elimination of child labor. A phased and multi-sectoral strategy is applied consisting of the following steps:

- Motivating a broad alliance of partners to acknowledge and act against child labor.
- Carrying out a situational analysis to find out about child labor problems in a country.
- Assisting with developing and implementing national policies on child labor problems.
- Strengthening existing organizations and setting up institutional mechanisms.
- Creating awareness on the problem nationwide, in communities and workplaces.
- Promoting the development and application of protective legislation.

- Supporting direct action with (potential) child workers for demonstration purposes.
- Replicating and expanding successful projects into the programs of partners.
- Mainstreaming child labor issues into socio-economic policies, programs and budgets.

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